

Iowa's State Improvement Plan  
Improving Results for Students with Disabilities  
CFDA: 84.323A  
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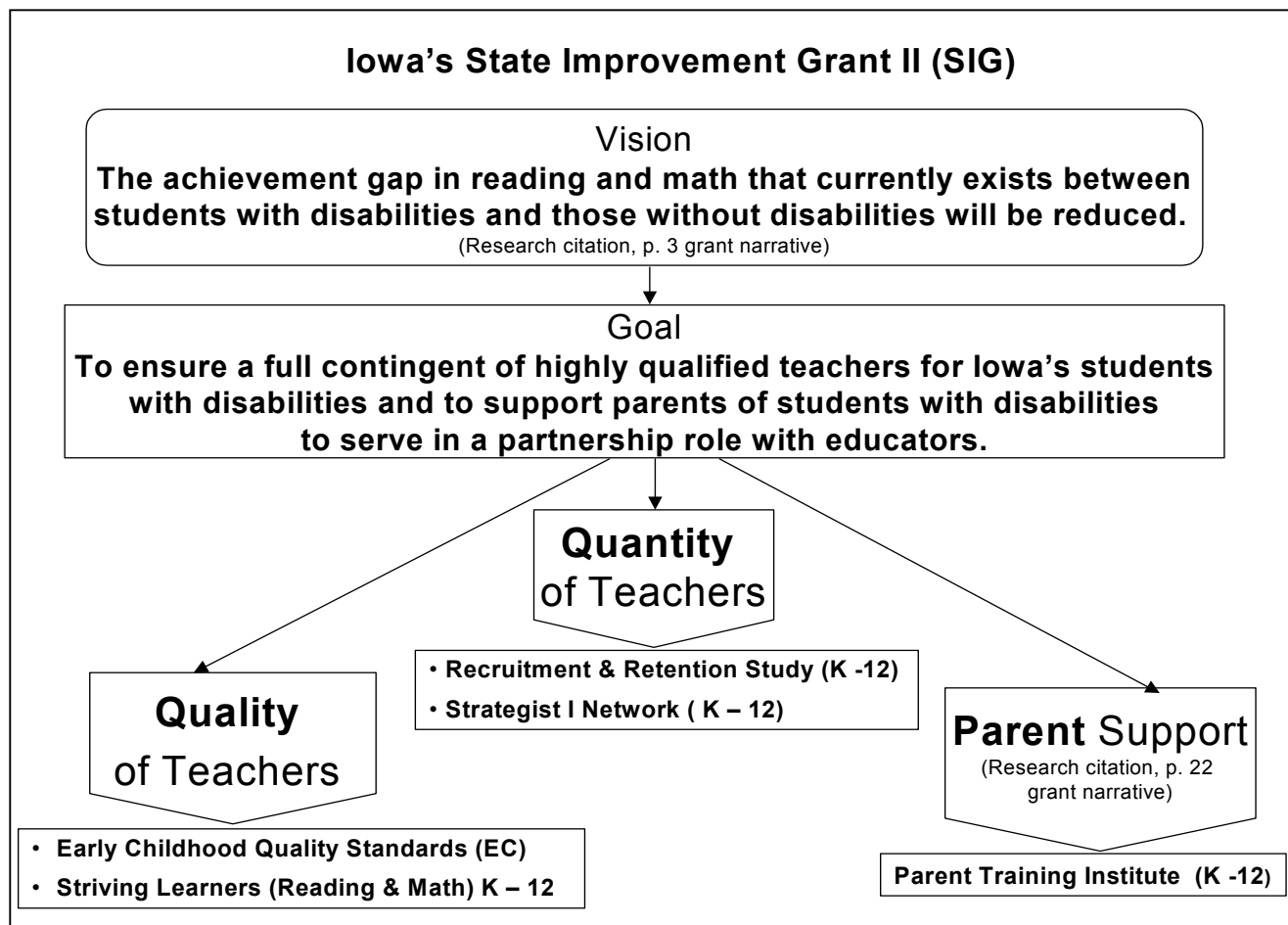
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Iowa's State Improvement Grant (SIG) is guided by a single vision that is supported by a unifying goal. Each grant initiative is a path toward the goal and a means of advancing the vision.

The vision calls for reducing the achievement gap that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities. In order to reach the vision, Iowa's SIG goal calls for ensuring a full contingent of highly qualified teachers and for working with parents as partners.

Research supports Iowa's approach to increasing student achievement through improved teacher competency. The breadth and depth of that research provides overwhelming evidence that well designed staff development and appropriate teacher preparation can increase student learning (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002; National Staff Development Council, 2000; and, Darling-Hammond, 1998).

Research also demonstrates the positive impact of parental involvement on children's academic achievement. According to Berta and Henderson (1994), "The evidence is now beyond dispute. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life."

The research on the key nature of teacher and parental impact guided the design of Iowa's grant. The initiatives (paths to the vision and goal) address needs in both early childhood and K-12 systems. They include:

- Ensuring an adequate supply of fully qualified teachers through the Recruitment and Retention Study and the Strategist I Network
- Improving the competencies (quality) of teachers through the Early Childhood Quality Standards initiative and the Striving Learners initiative
- Working with parents as partners through the diversity initiative of the Parent Training Institute

# Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424)



U.S. Department of Education

Form Approved  
OMB No. 1875-0106  
Exp. 11/30/2004

## Applicant Information

### 1. Name and Address

Legal Name: Iowa Department of Education

Address: 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> & Grand Ave.

Grimes State Office Building

Des Moines IA  
City State

Polk  
County

50319 - 0146  
ZIP Code + 4

2. Applicant's D-U-N-S Number | 8 | 0 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

3. Applicant's T-I-N | 8 | 2 | - | 6 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 5 |

4. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #: 84. 3 | 2 | 3 | A |

Title: Iowa's State Improvement Grant: Improving Results  
for Students with Disabilities

5. Project Director: Diane Accola

Address: 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> & Grand Ave

Des Moines IA 50319 0146  
City State Zip code + 4  
Tel. #: (515 ) 242 -5104 Fax #: ( 515 ) 242-6019

E-Mail Address: Diane.Accola@iowa.gov

## Application Information

### 9. Type of Submission:

-PreApplication -Application  
Construction Construction  
Non-Construction X Non-Construction

### 10. Is application subject to review by Executive Order 12372 process?

X Yes (Date made available to the Executive Order 12372  
process for review): 2 / 11 / 2004  
No (If "No," check appropriate box below.)  
Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.  
Program has not been selected by State for review.

11. Proposed Project Dates: 10 / 1 / 2004 9 / 30 / 2007  
Start Date: End Date:

## Estimated Funding

14a. Federal \$ 3,441,424 . 00  
b. Applicant \$ 903,287 . 00  
c. State \$ . 00  
d. Local \$ . 00  
e. Other \$ . 00  
f. Program Income \$ . 00  
g. TOTAL \$ 4,344,711 . 00

## Authorized Representative Information

15. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this preapplication/application are true

and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant

and the applicant will comply with the attached assurances if the assistance is awarded.

a. Authorized Representative (Please type or print name clearly.)

b. Title: Director, Iowa Department of Education

c. Tel. #: ( 515 ) 281 - 3436 Fax #: ( 515 ) 281 - 4122

d. E-Mail Address: Ted.Stilwell@ed.state.ia.us

e. Signature of Authorized Representative

Date: / /

## Organizational Unit

6. Novice Applicant Yes X No

7. Is the applicant delinquent on any Federal debt? Yes X No  
(If "Yes," attach an explanation.)

8. Type of Applicant (Enter appropriate letter in the box.) | S |

A - State F - Independent School District  
B - Local G - Public College or University  
C - Special District H - Private, Non-profit College or University  
D - Indian Tribe I - Non-profit Organization  
E - Individual J - Private, Profit-Making Organization

K - Other (Specify):

12. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at  
any time during the proposed project period?

Yes (Go to 12a.) X No (Go to item 13.)

12a. Are all the research activities proposed designated to be  
exempt from the regulations?

Yes (Provide Exemption(s) #):

No (Provide Assurance #):

13. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Iowa's State Improvement Grant: Improving Results  
for Students with Disabilities

## **Part II**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****BUDGET INFORMATION****NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: OMB Approved

Name of Institution/Organization  
Iowa Department of Education

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	0	0	0			0
2. Fringe Benefits	0	0	0			0
3. Travel	5,000	5,000	5,000			15,000
4. Equipment	0	0	0			0
5. Supplies	0	0	0			0
6. Contractual	856,563	861,617	845,717			2,563,897
7. Construction	0	0	0			0
8. Other	43,272	38,218	54,118			135,608
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	972,183	982,917	970,849			2,714,505
10. Indirect Costs	615	615	615			1,845
11. Training Stipends	171,000	171,000	171,000			513,000
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	1,076,450	1,076,450	1,076,450			3,229,350

Name of Institution/Organization Iowa Department of Education			Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.		OMB Control Number: 1890-0004  Expiration Date: OMB Approved	
<b>SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY</b> <b>NON-FEDERAL FUNDS</b>						
Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	210,000	214,812	219,106			643,918
2. Fringe Benefits	55,818	56,935	57,816			170,569
3. Travel	2,600	2,600	2,600			7,800
4. Equipment	0	0	0			0
5. Supplies	0	0	0			0
6. Contractual	18,000	18,000	20,500			56,500
7. Construction	0	0	0			0
8. Other	36,148	48,882	34,314			119,344
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	322,566	341,229	334,336			998,131
10. Indirect Costs	0	0	0			0
11. Training Stipends	0	0	0			0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	322,566	341,229	334,336			998,131

Matching Funds: All matching funds are from Iowa's IDEA Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities

**Aug, 2004 adjustment: Move \$10,000 for external evaluator to match annually, move Project Director meeting costs to match annually.****Add \$2000 for RRC website maintenance***SIG Project Management and Evaluation (SIG) Initiative*

			FY1	FY2	FY3				
			SIG	Match	SIG	Match	SIG	Match	Total
Personnel	SIG Director	0.5 FTE	0	35000	0	35700	0	36414	107114
	SIG Evaluator 1	0.1 FTE	0	7200	0	7344	0	7491	22035
	SIG Evaluator 2	0.1 FTE	0	7200	0	7344	0	7491	22035
	SIG Evaluator 3	0.1 FTE	0	7200	0	7344	0	7491	22035
	Total Personnel		0	56600	0	57732	0	58887	173219
Fringe Benefits	28% of Salaries		0	15848	0	16165	0	16488	48501
	Total Benefits		0	15848	0	16165	0	16232	48245
Travel	In-state		0	900	0	900	0	900	2700
	Project Director's Meeting		0	1700	0	1700	0	1700	5100
	Total Travel		0	2600	0	2600	0	2600	7800
Contractual	External evaluator		0	10000	0	10000	0	10000	30000
	RRC (website)		2000	0	2000	0	2000	0	6000
	Total Contractual		2000	10000	2000	10000	2000	10000	36000
Other	Printing		0	500	0	500	0	500	1500
	Total Other		0	500	0	500	0	500	1500
Total Direct Costs			2000	85548	2000	86997	2000	88219	266764
Indirect Costs (12.3%)			0		0		0		0
SIG Project Management/Evaluation Costs			2000	85548	2000	86997	2000	88219	266764
Total Project Management/Evaluation Cost (SIG + Match)			87548		88997		90219		266764
State Improvement Grant Request			2000		2000		2000		6000

Matching Funds: Matching funds are from Iowa's IDEA Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities and state funds

**Aug, 2004 adjustment: Move approximately \$37,000 from SIG budget "Program materials" section to match annually.**

**Materials will be provided by DE and local AEAs.**

***SIG Research-based Instruction for Striving Learners Initiative***

		<i>FY1</i>		<i>FY2</i>		<i>FY3</i>		
		<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	Project Coordinator 0.4 FTE	0	28000	0	28560	0	29131	85691
	Project Coordinator 0.4 FTE	0	28000	0	28560	0	29131	85691
	<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57120</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58262</b>	<b>171382</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	28% of Salaries	0	15680	0	15994	0	16313	47986.96
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15680</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15994</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16313</b>	<b>47987</b>
<b>Travel</b>	In-state	2000	0	2000	0	2000	0	6000
	<b>Total Travel</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6000</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	Admin. support - evaluation and data	28353	0	31036	0	32201	0	91590
	AEA Trainers	149655	0	149655	0	149655	0	448965
	Instructional designer	90000	0	90000	0	90000	0	270000
	<b>Total Contractual</b>	<b>268008</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>270691</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>271856</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>810555</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>Program materials</b>	<b>38000</b>	<b>35000</b>	<b>31618</b>	<b>43382</b>	<b>46186</b>	<b>28814</b>	<b>223000</b>
	<b>Total Other</b>	<b>38000</b>	<b>35000</b>	<b>31618</b>	<b>43382</b>	<b>46186</b>	<b>28814</b>	<b>223000</b>
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>		<b>308008</b>	<b>106680</b>	<b>304309</b>	<b>116496</b>	<b>320042</b>	<b>103389</b>	<b>1258924</b>
Indirect Costs (12.3%)		246		246		246		738
<b>Training Stipends</b>	LEA teams	171000	0	171000	0	171000	0	513000
	<b>Total Stipends</b>	<b>171000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>171000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>171000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>513000</b>
Striving Learners Initiative Costs		479254	106680	475555	116496	491288	103389	1772662
Total Striving Learners Cost (SIG + Match)		585934		592051		594677		1772662
<b>State Improvement Grant Request</b>		<b>479254</b>		<b>475555</b>		<b>491288</b>		<b>1446097</b>



Matching Funds: All matching funds are from Iowa's IDEA Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities

**Aug. 2004 adjustment: Decrease in contracted amount for evaluation by \$10,000 annually, matching funds will replace SIG dollars.**

**Move minor amounts (<\$1000) from "Program Materials" from SIG budget to match dollars.**

*SIG Early Learning Quality Standards Initiative*

			FY1		FY2		FY3		
			SIG	Match	SIG	Match	SIG	Match	Total
Personnel	Project Coordinator	0.3 FTE	0	21000	0	21420	0	21848	64268
	Project Coordinator	0.3 FTE	0	21000	0	21420	0	21848	64268
	Total Personnel		0	42000	0	42840	0	43697	128537
Fringe Benefits	28% of Salaries		0	11760	0	11995	0	12235	35990
	Total Benefits		0	11760	0	11995	0	12235	35990
Travel	In-state		1500	0	1500	0	1500	0	4500
	Total Travel		1500	0	1500	0	1500	0	4500
Contractual	Evaluator		0	10000	0	10000	0	10000	30000
	AEA Training, Self Assessment, Coaching		235800	0	235800	0	235800	0	707400
	Program Materials		44400	0	40700	0	18500	0	103600
	Total Contractual		280200	0	276500	0	254300	0	811000
Other	ICN Costs		0	0	1000	0	1000	0	2000
	Program Materials		2772	648	3100	5000	4432	5000	20952
	Total Other		2772	648	4100	5000	5432	5000	22952
Total Direct Costs			284472	54408	282100	59835	261232	60932	1002979
Indirect Costs (12.3%)			185		185		185		554
Early Childhood Initiative Costs			284657	54408	282285	59835	261417	60932	1003533
Total Early Childhood Cost (SIG + Match)			339065		342120		322348		1003533
State Improvement Grant Request			284,657		282285		261417		828358

Iowa's State Improvement Plan: Improving Results for Students  
with Disabilities,

Budget Detail, page 4

Matching Funds: All matching funds are from Iowa's IDEA Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities

**Aug. 2004 adjustment: Decrease in contracted amount for evaluation to \$10,000 annually, matching funds will replace SIG dollars**

***SIG Class C Endorsement Initiative***

		<i>FY1</i>		<i>FY2</i>		<i>FY3</i>		
		<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	Project Coordinator 0.3 FTE	0	21000	0	21420	0	21848	64268
	Project Coordinator 0.1 FTE	0	7000	0	7140	0	7282	21422
	<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28560</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29130</b>	<b>85690</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	28% of Salaries	0	7840	0	7997	0	8157	23993
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7840</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7997</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8157</b>	<b>23993</b>
<b>Travel</b>	In-state	1500	0	1500	0	1500	0	4500
	<b>Total Travel</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4500</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	Counselor/Advocate	57063	0	57063	0	57063	0	171189
	Administrative support	13307	0	13307	0	13307	0	39921
	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>45000</b>
	Administrative costs	7322	0	7322	0	7322	0	21966
	Program materials	2500	0	2500	0	2500	0	7500
	Travel	3000	0	3000	0	3000	0	9000
	IHE liaisons	93813	0	93813	0	93813	0	281439
	<b>Total Contractual</b>	<b>187005</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>187005</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>187005</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>576015</b>
<b>Other</b>	ICN meeting costs	2500	0	2500	0	2500	0	7500
	<b>Total Other</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7500</b>
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>		<b>191005</b>	<b>40840</b>	<b>191005</b>	<b>41557</b>	<b>191005</b>	<b>42287</b>	<b>697699</b>
<b>Indirect Costs (12.3%)</b>		<b>185</b>		<b>185</b>		<b>185</b>		<b>554</b>
Endorsement Costs		191190	40840	191190	41557	191190	42287	698252
Total Endorsement Cost (SIG + Match)		232030		232746		233476		698252
<b>State Improvement Grant Request</b>		<b>191189.5</b>		<b>191190</b>		<b>191190</b>		<b>573569</b>

Iowa's State Improvement Plan: Improving Results for Students with Disabilities

Budget Detail, page 5

Matching Funds: All matching funds are from Iowa's IDEA Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities

**Aug. 2004 adjustment: Year 3 (only) decrease in contract amount for survey designer, DE matching funds will replace SIG dollars**

***SIG Recruitment and Retention Component***

		<i>FY1</i>		<i>FY2</i>		<i>FY3</i>		
		<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	Project Coordinator 0.3 FTE	0	21000	0	21420	0	21848	64268
	<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21420</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21848</b>	<b>64268</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	28% of Salaries	0	5880	0	5997.6	0	6117.6	17995
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2730</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2785</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2840</b>	<b>8355</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	Data Analyst	5000	0	7500	0	7500	0	20000
	<b>Survey Designer</b>	0	0	0	0	<b>2500</b>	<b>2500</b>	5000
	<b>Total Contractual</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>25000</b>
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>		<b>5000</b>	<b>23730</b>	<b>7500</b>	<b>24205</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>27188</b>	<b>97623</b>
Endorsement Costs		5000	23730	7500	24205	10000	27188	97623
Total Endorsement Cost (SIG + Match)		28730		31705		37188		97623
<b>State Improvement Grant Request</b>		<b>5000</b>		<b>7500</b>		<b>10000</b>		<b>22500</b>

Iowa's State Improvement Plan: Improving Results for Students with Disabilities, Budget Detail, page 6

Matching Funds: All matching funds are from PTI's other funding sources

**Aug. 2004 adjustment: Decrease contract amount approximatey \$5000 annually - from the "travel " allocation.**

***SIG PTI Initiative***

		<i>FY1</i>		<i>FY2</i>		<i>FY3</i>		
		<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>SIG</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	Project Coordinator 0.1 FTE	0	7000	0	7000	0	7000	21000
	<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7140</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7282</b>	<b>21422</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	28% of Salaries	0	1960	0	1999	0	2039	5998
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2039</b>	<b>5998</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	Administrative	10850	0	12083	0	12323	0	35256
	Staff	93500	0	95838	0	98233	0	287571
	<b>Travel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Supplies	2000	0	2000	0	2000	0	6000
	Parent training	8000	0	8000	0	8000	0	24000
	Building Rent	0	3000	0	3000	0	3000	9000
	<b>Total Contractual</b>	<b>114350</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>117921</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>120556</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>361827</b>
PTI Initiative Costs		114350	11960	117921	12139	120556	12321	389247.16
Total PTI Initiative Cost (SIG + Match)		126310		130060		132876.96		389247.16
<b>State Improvement Grant Request</b>		<b>114350</b>		<b>117921</b>		<b>120556</b>		<b>352827</b>

## Priority Requirements

Page #	Requirements
<u>60–61</u>	(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities. (See Section 606 of IDEA)
<u>10–11 &amp; 90</u>	(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects. (See Section 661(f)(1)(A) of IDEA)
<u>39</u>	(c) Applicant must describe steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. (See Section 427, GEPA)
<u>Budget Narrative</u>	(d) Projects funded under these priorities must budget for a three-day Project's Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. during each year of the project.

**Iowa's State Improvement Grant (SIG)**  
**Improving Results for Students with Disabilities**  
**CFDA: 84.323A**

**Abstract**

Iowa will focus its grant-funded efforts in a three-year State Improvement Plan (SIP) designed to decrease the achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities.

A variety of factors—student achievement data, teacher supply and competency data, and needs brought about by state and federal mandates—point to reading and math discrepancies as a pivotal point of entry to bring about increased success for students with disabilities, not only in their early childhood and school years but throughout their lives.

The plan reflects a careful examination of current state and local efforts aimed at improving student achievement. This analysis resulted in the design of grant-funded objectives that complement current activities and address unmet needs. The objectives were also shaped by the recognition that teacher competency is a key factor in increasing student achievement. As a result of the analysis of data and research, the following vision, goal, and objectives will guide Iowa's SIP.

*Vision:* The achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced.

*Goal:* To ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to prepare parents of students with disabilities to work as partners with educators.

*Objectives:*

- To increase the skills of middle and high school reading teachers and elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically based instructional strategies;
- To increase the capacity of early childhood programs to provide quality preschool experiences by meeting Iowa's Quality Standards;
- To increase the competence of special education teachers by assisting Class C teachers to achieve their full professional status;
- To generate an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers (Recruitment and Retention Study); and,
- To assist culturally diverse parents of children with disabilities to serve as partners with educators.

Each of the five objectives will be achieved through a corresponding initiative that was specifically designed for Iowa's SIP. The initiatives are based on stringent standards and scientifically based research as required by state and federal legislation. Iowa's SIP is designed to integrate all initiatives into existing support systems and to leverage systemic changes for each of the objectives in order to "institutionalize" the components.

Evaluation will be both formative and summative and will assess performance measures for activities, objectives and the goal. Outcome measures will utilize student achievement data to assess progress toward the vision of decreasing the achievement gap.

**Iowa's State Improvement Plan**  
**Improving Results for Students with Disabilities**

CFDA: 84.323A

**Introduction**

Historically, Iowa has been known as a high-ranking state for academic achievement and quality education. However, recent federal accountability requirements to disaggregate subgroup student data revealed a substantial achievement gap between students in general and special education. Therefore Iowa's plan will address that achievement gap.

Iowa's approach to improving results for children with disabilities specifically focuses on the absolute priority that supports state educational agencies (SEAs) and their partners in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transition services for professional development, technical assistance and dissemination of knowledge about best practices to improve results for children with disabilities.

Iowa will systemically focus each year of this three-year State Improvement Plan (SIP) on efforts designed to decrease the achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities.

A variety of factors—student achievement data, teacher supply and competency data, and needs generated by state and federal mandates—point to reading and math discrepancies as a pivotal point of entry to increase success for students with disabilities, not only in their early childhood and school years but throughout their lives.

In addition to data analysis, this plan reflects a careful examination of current state and local efforts aimed at improving student achievement. This analysis resulted in the design of five grant-funded objectives that complement current activities while addressing unmet needs. The

objectives were also shaped by the recognition that teacher competency is a key factor in increasing student achievement. As a result of the analysis of data and research, the following vision, goal, and objectives will guide Iowa's SIP.

*Vision:* The achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced.

*Goal:* To ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to support parents of students with disabilities to serve in a partnership role with educators.

*Objectives:*

- To increase the skills of middle and high school reading teachers and elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically based instructional strategies;
- To increase the capacity of early childhood programs to provide quality preschool experiences by meeting Iowa's Quality Standards;
- To increase the competence of special education teachers by assisting Class C teachers to achieve their full professional status;
- To generate an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers (Recruitment and Retention Study); and,
- To assist culturally diverse parents of children with disabilities to serve as partners with educators.

Each of the five objectives will be achieved through a corresponding initiative specifically designed for Iowa's SIP.



## **Need For Project**

Iowa's approach to reducing the achievement gap in reading and math for students with disabilities is based on a comprehensive needs assessment that not only considered achievement rates of students but also considered the current strengths and concerns of instructional and support systems for individuals with disabilities ranging in age from birth to 21. That all-encompassing assessment resulted in the development of a variety of strategies targeted at increasing math and reading achievement, and a strategic goal that calls for increasing the numbers and competencies of teachers serving students with disabilities. Recognizing the critical importance of parent involvement, Iowa's plan also focuses on assisting parents to work as partners with educators.

Research supports Iowa's approach to increasing student achievement through improved teacher competency. The breadth and depth of that research provides overwhelming evidence that well designed staff development and appropriate teacher preparation can increase student learning (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002; National Staff Development Council, 2000; and, Darling-Hammond, 1998).

### ***Needs Section: Iowa Goals Under 612 of IDEA***

Iowa's goals, outlined under section 612(a)(16) of IDEA, as outlined in Iowa's Eligibility Plan for IDEA '97, include a focus on academic achievement (Goal 1) and on the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students (Goal 2).

**Goal 1: Improve the level of learning, achievement and performance of all students so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.**

**Goal 2: Improve performance of all students so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.**

Data related to these goals are contained in the student achievement tables in the Needs Section of this application.

Iowa's proposed SIP will not only complement the current efforts aimed at those goals, but will also assist the state in making measurable progress in Goal 1 through the focused effort outlined in the vision of this plan that calls for a reduction in the achievement gap in reading and math which currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities to be reduced.

Goal 2 of Iowa's Eligibility Plan is being addressed through a statewide behavioral initiative entitled Success4 (See Successful Strategies section of Needs Section).

***Needs Section: Student Achievement Data***

The driving force behind Iowa's SIP is the achievement gap in reading and math between students with disabilities and those without disabilities. Students with disabilities are identified as students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). Iowa currently mandates achievement assessment and disaggregation of subgroups in reading and math in 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades, as described in Iowa's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Accountability Workbook. The following data illustrate the disparity in achievement rates among students with IEPs and those without.

*Table 1: Reading Proficiency Rates for Grades 4, 8, and 11*

	1998-2000	1999-2001	2000-2002	2001-2003
Grade 4 with IEP	36.60	35.20	28.50	23.30
Grade 4 without IEP	72.70	73.00	74.60	73.80
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>36.10</b>	<b>37.80</b>	<b>46.10</b>	<b>50.50</b>
Grade 8 with IEP	29.60	23.70	25.30	22.90
Grade 8 without IEP	75.70	75.80	76.20	76.90

	1998-2000	1999-2001	2000-2002	2001-2003
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>46.10</b>	<b>52.10</b>	<b>50.90</b>	<b>54.00</b>
Grade 11 with IEP	29.40	26.80	28.20	27.50
Grade 11 without IEP	77.80	78.20	81.10	82.00
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>48.40</b>	<b>51.40</b>	<b>52.90</b>	<b>54.50</b>

Source: Iowa Condition of Education Report, 2003

*Table 2: Math Proficiency Rates for Grades 4, 8, and 11*

	1998-2000	1999-2001	2000-2002	2001-2003
Grade 4 with IEP	41.40	40.50	36.80	35.00
Grade 4 without IEP	75.80	76.60	77.30	80.10
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>34.40</b>	<b>36.10</b>	<b>40.50</b>	<b>45.10</b>
Grade 8 with IEP	31.60	25.20	26.80	27.00
Grade 8 without IEP	80.30	80.70	80.40	81.00
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>48.70</b>	<b>55.50</b>	<b>53.60</b>	<b>54.00</b>
Grade 11 with IEP	41.00	39.10	38.80	39.70
Grade 11 without IEP	82.60	82.50	85.00	86.90
<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>41.60</b>	<b>43.40</b>	<b>46.20</b>	<b>47.20</b>

Source: Iowa Condition of Education Report, 2003

Research indicates (Gleason and Dynarski, 1998) that student achievement is a contributing factor in dropout rates. Subsequently, increased student achievement in reading and math will not only improve student success in content areas, but will also likely contribute to a decrease in dropout rates. Iowa will continue to monitor the longitudinal impact of the SIP initiatives on

graduation rates (Table 3) as well as other Iowa initiatives that are focusing on increasing the graduation rates of students with disabilities.

*Table 3: Iowa Graduation Rates*

	Graduation Rates	Drop out Rates
2000 – 01	Students w/IEPs 67%	Students w/IEPs 29%
	Students w/o IEPs 89.2%	Students w/o IEPs 1.85%
2001 – 02	Students w/IEPs 74%	Students w/IEPs 23 %
	Students w/o IEPs 89.4%	Students w/o IEPs 1.62%
2002 - 03	Students w/IEPs 69%	Students w/IEPs 25%
	Students w/o IEPs NA	Students w/o IEPs NA

Source: OSEP Annual Report and Iowa Condition of Education Report, 2003

Iowa is moving forward to collect participation data for post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities. Those data will be available in 2005 through a new data collection system entitled Project Easier and Iowa's current Information Management System (IMS).

***Needs Section: Striving Learners in response to student data***

The comparison of reading and math achievement of Iowa students with IEPs to students without IEPs yields a picture of significant disparity as referenced in Tables 1 and 2. These data point to a significant need in scientifically-based instruction in reading and math for striving learners.

In response to these achievement gaps and considering statewide efforts that are already under way in reading at the elementary level (Iowa's Reading First Program) and in math at the middle school level (Every Student Counts), Iowa's SIP will focus on assisting students in grades not covered by the two current programs. These two current programs utilize the

scientifically based instructional strategies that meet the highest standards set by Iowa’s Content Network (See *Significance Section*). As the tables below indicate, the combination of existing efforts and SIG funded efforts will provide comprehensive reading and math programs for all grade levels.

*Table 4: Striving Learners Reading– Coordination with Reading First, Grades 1 - 3*

	Elementary school	Middle school	High school
Iowa’s Current Program	Reading First		
SIG funded initiative expands to these grades		Striving Learners	Striving Learners

*Table 5: Striving Learners Math– Coordination with Every Student Counts, Grades 5 - 8*

	Elementary school	Middle school	High school
Iowa’s Current Program		Every Student Counts	
SIG funded initiative expands to these grades	Striving Learners		Striving Learners

***Needs Section: Early Childhood Quality Standards***

In order to assist all students in being successful, Iowa has focused its early childhood efforts for the past three years on Quality Standards for early childhood programs. Those Quality Standards, in the final stages of approval, focus on the following criteria: an adequate and varied array of age-appropriate materials; functional use of space; safe environment; established and clearly defined “learning centers;” well-rounded assortment of activities; encouragement of teachers for children to think, reason, question, and experiment; and interactive communication. Such standards presuppose qualified and prepared teachers and an appropriate setting (least

restrictive environment), two requirements for early and continued success of children with disabilities.

Currently in Iowa, quality care and education environments for young children are challenging to locate for all children, especially those with disabilities. One source of evidence was through the process of focused monitoring that examined state data which measures the percent of young children with disabilities who receive services in the least restrictive environment (generally integrated early childhood settings). State data from 12 regions or area education agencies (AEAs) was collected and analyzed to meet accountability requirements of IDEA 97 and improve programs and services. Since 1999 the state early childhood integration average has ranged from 44 to 48 percent. During this same timeframe, four AEAs have consistently been significantly below this average, scores ranging from 13 percent to 38 percent and one AEA has demonstrated a significant drop since 2002. The table below presents the detail in comparing the five AEAs consistently below the state average in integration of young children with disabilities into early childhood settings with the state average.

*Table 6: Percentage of children with IEPs receiving services in integrated settings*

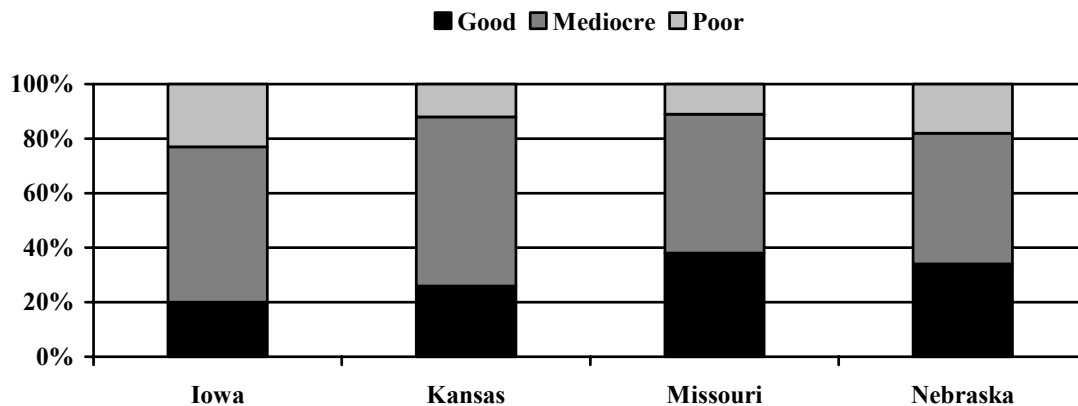
<b>AEA</b>	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
9	18.24%	19.31%	24.31%	26.6%	27.6%
10	55.64%	51.15%	52.87%	50.3%	38.29%
14	12.9%	12.26%	19.02%	27.1%	37.59%
15	18.54%	23.3%	19.25%	35.8%	25.35%
16	17.92%	26.7%	29.03%	28.34%	25.35%
<b>State</b>	44.21%	45.27%	46.08%	47.71%	47.33%

Source: Key Performance Indicator Report, 2003

In diagnosing the source of the problem, state early childhood consultants from special and general education interviewed Early Childhood Special Education supervisors and lead AEA representatives from the five AEAs whose LRE percentages were significantly below the state average. Representatives from each of these AEAs consistently stated that they were often unwilling to staff children with disabilities into community based early childhood (CBEC) programs due to the lack of quality and highly qualified teachers in these programs.

Other data have substantiated this concern of lack of available quality preschool experiences in Iowa. In 2002, a regional study conducted by the Midwest Child Care Research Consortium assessed the quality of full-day childcare in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). The results of this study indicated that Iowa's full-day preschool classrooms were lower in quality than three neighboring states as shown in Table 7. (Heglend, 2002).

*Table 7: Percentage of Midwest Care At Each Quality Level, N = 365*



Source: Heglend, 2002

More recently, in January of 2003, Governor Vilsack in his Condition of the State Address challenged Iowans to “create an Iowa where virtually all of our children have access to quality

preschool.....” As part of the Governor’s Leadership Agenda, he set a priority goal that “90% of children will have a quality preschool experience.” (See Appendix for Letters of Support from Governor and other required partners.) Baseline data for the Governor’s priority goal indicated that only 15% of Iowa’s preschool experiences met the defined standard of quality (programs that are National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited, met Head Start program performance standards, or met state standards. Quality early childhood environments are magnified in Iowa as we place second in the nation for the percentage of children under the age of six with both parents working outside the home (71.3%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Other areas examined during Iowa’s needs assessment include the following.

***Needs Section: Compliance Issues***

Iowa is making substantial progress on the Part C compliance issues cited in OSEP’s compliance review in 2002. Iowa will meet all Part C Compliance requirements by July 2004. Because progress and appropriate funding support are targeted to these areas, this proposal will partner with, but not seek funding for Part C. The full Part C Compliance Plan and Progress Report can be found in the Appendix.

Iowa currently has no Part B compliance citations and is focused on several improvement initiatives, which are outlined in sections of this application, guided by Iowa’s Part B Improvement Plan (in Appendix) and supported by data found in the Biennial Performance Report (in Appendix).

***Needs Section: Stakeholders Input***

*Special Education Advisory Panel:* Iowa’s Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) for Part B issues played a key role in the needs assessment that shaped Iowa’s SIP. SEAP includes membership from individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities,



representatives from higher education institutions, representatives of minority and other culturally diverse groups, representatives from juvenile justice, and representatives from other stakeholder groups. Many of those individuals represent the required partners in the joint venture of this plan.

In January 2004, DE coordinators of the SIP and grant application appeared before the SEAP to provide an outline of proposed goals and objectives for the grant (Membership listed in Appendix). In addition to the oral feedback from the panel at the January meeting, input was solicited via e-mail. The e-mail message (contained in the Appendix) sought guidance on prioritizing grant goals, objectives, initiatives and additional suggestions. Themes from the oral and written responses were as follows:

- The vision to decrease the reading and math achievement discrepancy is appropriate and timely.
- The early childhood focus holds promise for increased success that can be measured in longitudinal data on achievement.
- The recruitment and retention study is key to ascertaining personnel needs
- Because behavioral issues are not included in the grant, retain emphasis on current Success4 initiative that is funded by Part B and that has been moved into a statewide general and special education joint venture (see information in current successful strategies in this Needs Section).
- The PTI component with support for parents from culturally diverse backgrounds will not only assist families of children with disabilities but will also address the needs of students with cultural challenges. It is a well-designed program.

*State Interagency Coordinating Council Established under Part C of IDEA:* Members of Iowa's Part C Coordinating Council received a summary of Iowa's proposed SIP and considered how they interfaced with current DE funded efforts to enhance progress on Part C compliance and improvement issues. Members indicated support for the plan, especially for the Quality Standards project for early childhood that will work in concert with several current Part C initiatives.

Positive feedback was also received from the Iowa State Board of Education Strategic Team for Early Learning. The team consists of state consultants from early childhood entities: Part C, Shared Visions, Head Start/Even Start, Community Empowerment, early childhood special education, Title V, food and nutrition and instructional services and other state agency programs with early childhood programs. This team works to coordinate general and special education statewide efforts for children ages 0-8.

***Needs Section: Annual Performance Report for OSEP***

Iowa is currently developing its Annual Performance Report (APR) for OSEP. The data in mandated sections of the APR that are relevant for Iowa's SIP are contained in the needs assessment sections on student achievement and personnel. Subsequently, Iowa's APR and SIP are not only aligned, but will also work in concert with programs funded with Part B monies.

***Needs Section: An Adequate Supply of Qualified Teachers***

Iowa has consistently faced a chronic shortage of qualified special education teachers. Those shortages are calculated annually by the Iowa Department of Education (DE) and published annually by the Iowa Student College Aid Commission. Data used to calculate shortages include the number of Class C (fully licensed, but not fully endorsed) endorsements, the number of job postings on Iowa's statewide web-based teacher recruitment site, and the number of anticipated

graduates in each endorsement area in Iowa's preservice institutions. A table in the Appendix entitled *Iowa's Special Education Teacher Shortages 2001-2004*, documents the designated annual shortages in special education teaching for the past three years. Although Iowa continues to face teacher shortages in relation to Class C endorsements, the state's accountability plan for NCLB meets the highly qualified teacher requirement in that all teachers must be licensed in order to be employed in Iowa schools.

Despite the continuing shortages of special education teachers, trend data in the tables below indicate that Iowa is making some progress in reducing the number of Class C special education teachers. A number of factors have contributed to these declining numbers and percentages:

- Iowa's web-based teacher recruitment site that recruits teachers from around the country to Iowa schools;
- Iowa's Teacher Quality Act which contains an increased wage component;
- Iowa's forgivable loan programs for teacher shortage areas; and
- Iowa's first SIG pilot initiative, the Multicategorical Resource-Regent's Endorsement Initiative (MCR-REI) which showed some success assisting Iowa multicategorical resource (MCR) teachers to move from Class C endorsements to full endorsement status.

The preliminary success of the MCR-REI program is the foundation for the enhanced and expanded version recommended in this grant application (the Strategist I Initiative). This initiative will not only respond to Iowa's new competency-based licensure system, but will expand to include all colleges and universities preparing teachers in Iowa who choose to participate. This initiative will offer access for full endorsement to all geographic areas of the state.

***Needs Section: Fully Endorsed Teachers: Strategist I Network***

Iowa's current program to assist Class C teachers obtain full endorsement will be redesigned into the SIP Strategist I Network initiative which reflects the new licensure requirements focused on demonstrated competencies rather than successful completion of classes within a course of study.

Iowa prides itself on the fact that all teachers employed in accredited schools must be licensed; however, demand from schools needing fully endorsed MCR teachers (at both elementary and secondary levels) means that we continue to need serving those teachers who hold Class C endorsements. For the past five years, Iowa SIG dollars have supported an effort (the MCR-REI initiative) to assist MCR teachers with Class C Endorsements achieve full professional endorsements. This endorsement group was chosen for the 1997-2003 SIG programs because, statewide, MCR teachers have the highest numbers of Class C endorsements. The table below reflects a three-year trend in Class C endorsements for MCR teachers.

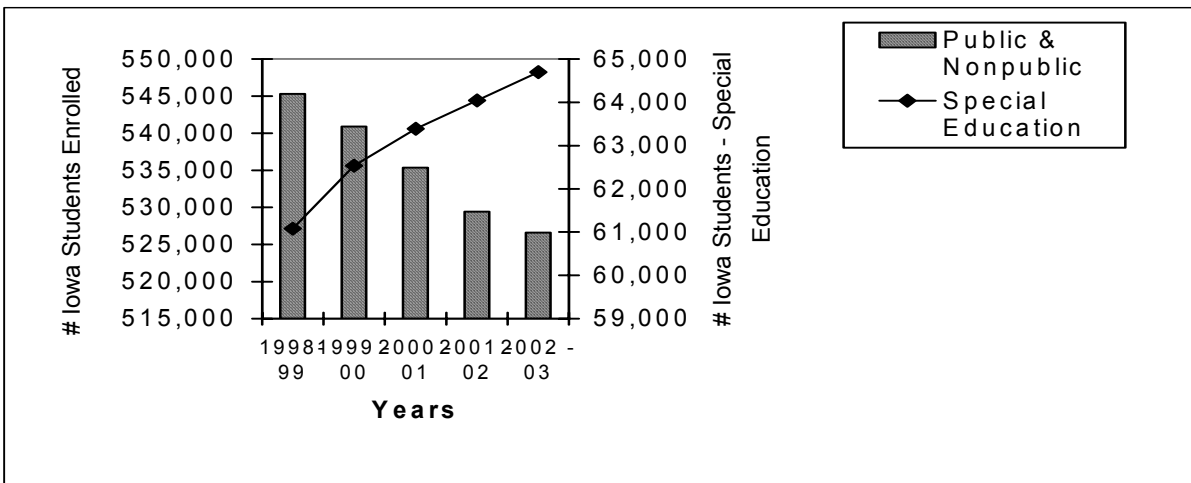
*Table 8: Percent and Number - Fully Endorsed/Class C Endorsements - MCR Teachers (FTE)*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Employed Fully endorsed MCR Teachers</i>	<i>Employed Class C MCR Teachers</i>	<i>Total Employed MCR Teachers</i>	<i>% Class C MCR Teachers</i>
1999 - 00	3602.29	377	3979.29	9.5
2000 - 01	3591.67	356	3947.67	9.0
2001 - 02	3979.2	344	4323.2	8.0

Source: 618 Report - Table 2

As the data indicate, Iowa has seen a gradual decline in the numbers of MCR Class C endorsements from 1999 to 2002 (the most recent data available). These numbers are promising especially considering the increase in numbers of special education students (for the corresponding years) and Iowa's overall decline in total student population.

Table 9: Numbers of all and special education students in Iowa



Source: Iowa Condition of Education Report, 2003

**MCR-REI Design:** MCR-REI, funded by Iowa's 1997-2003 SIG, was a five-year collaborative among Iowa's three Regents institutions, the Iowa Department of Education, and the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners. Designed to address the greatest teacher shortage area in the state (as determined by the number of Class C endorsements granted by the Board of Educational Examiners), MCR-REI provided a quality program of study for teachers with Class C endorsements in special education to become fully endorsed in the shortest amount of time possible. Key features of this program included:

- Access to some coursework via distance learning, using the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), a fiber optics system widely available throughout the state.
- Ability to complete supervision portion of course requirements in the participants' current classroom using a network of master teachers throughout the state.

- Coursework offered jointly by the Regents Institutions coordinated in a timely fashion and based upon the needs of program participants.
- Participants referred for endorsement to the Board of Educational Examiners by the Iowa Department of Education rather than an institution of higher education.

The MCR-REI program was unique in that it created an opportunity for teacher preparation institutions to collaborate in an innovative manner that addressed the acute need for quality teachers in Iowa. While the program made progress in assisting Class C endorsed teachers, the Strategist I Network holds an even greater potential to influence the continuing need for MCR teachers since it will address the new licensure competency system, include many more teacher preparation institutions and address an even greater geographic area.

***Needs Section: Gap analysis of existing efforts***

Iowa's SIP planning included a "gap" analysis to consider needs being addressed by existing initiatives and available data reflecting the efforts currently directed toward meeting all special education teachers and related personnel needs. Each of the tables below details the current status of both fully qualified and Class C licenses for all SPED teachers of children ages 3 through 21 and certification of related service personnel.

*Table 10: Percent and Number of Fully Endorsed and Class C Endorsements for All Special Education Teachers for Children Ages 3 to 5 (FTE)*

Year	Number of SPED Teachers for children 3 to 5	Number & percent - Class C SPED teachers for children 3 to 5	Total
1999-2000	415.13	25 (6 %)	440.13
2000-2001	383	19 (4.9 %)	402.17
2001-2002	365.21	13 (0.2 %)	378.21

Source: 618 - Table 2

*Table 11: Percent and Number of Fully Endorsed and Class C Endorsements for All Special Education Teachers for Children Ages 6 to 21 (FTE)*

Year	# SPED Teachers	# and % Class C SPED teachers	Total
1999 - 2000	4753.18	635 (11.78% of SPED teachers)	5388.18
2000-2001	4759.71	613 (11.40% of SPED teachers)	5372.71
2001-2002	4908.14	543 (9.96% of SPED teachers)	5451.14

Source: Federal 618 - Table 2

*Table 12: Percent and Number of Fully Endorsed and Not Fully Endorsed for Related Services Providers Serving Ages 3 to 21 (FTE) 2001-2002*

	2001-2002		
	Employed (Fully Endorsed)	Employed (Not fully Endorsed)	Total
Vocational Education	11.24	0	11.24
Physical Education	17	0	17
Work Study	42.29	1	43.29
Psychologists	298.18	31	329.18
Social Workers	248.6	0	248.6
Occupational Therapists	79.61	0	79.61
Audiologists	57.79	0	57.79
Recreation and Therapeutic	8	0	8
Diagnostic and Evaluation	4.1	0	4.1
Physical Therapists	47.83	0	47.83
Counselors	9.92	0	9.92

	2001-2002		
Speech Pathologists	525.93	6	531.93
Interpreters	145	0	145
Rehabilitation Counselors	0		0
Other professional Staff	548.12	23	571.12

Source: Federal 618 - Table 2

*Table 13: Special Education Paraprofessionals in Iowa (FTE)*

Year	Numbers (FTE)
1999-2000	4483.23
2000-2001	4999.98
2001 - 2002	5643.5

Source: Federal 618 - Table 2

***Needs Section*** activities: *Successful Strategies Currently in Place to Meet Needs*

Current funded by the Iowa DE to address personnel issues include, but are not limited to:

- A statewide requirement for all early childhood teachers (0-8) to acquire a unified license that includes competencies for teaching special education and general education children.
- A newly created program at the University of Northern Iowa to offer a graduate degree for teachers of the visually impaired. This program reduces Iowa's need for interstate agreements for shortage areas.
- A newly created endorsement program at the University of Iowa that offers endorsement for teachers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This program reduces Iowa's need for interstate agreements for shortage areas.



- Iowa continues to work with partnering and neighboring states for such low-incidence areas as teachers of children with deaf-blindness and participates in a regional agreement exchange with 8 neighboring states to facilitate transfer of teaching licenses.
- A state-funded (formerly SIG funded) career ladder project for special education paraeducators in high minority school districts who wish to become special education teachers. Tuition, mentors, childcare, transportation, and related supports are provided to the participants as they continue their paraeducator jobs and work part-time towards a teaching degree. The project encourages individuals of color through recruitment at high minority school districts and individuals with disabilities by partnering with disability coordinators at institutions of higher education.
- An initiative to recruit and retain school psychologists with supports that include: a facilitated transfer to an Iowa license for recruited out-of-state school psychologists, a paid internship for school psychologist candidates, a web-based recruitment site targeted towards out-of-state practitioners, and a distance education program at the University of Northern Iowa that helps current practitioners such as special education teachers, social workers, clinical psychologists, and other related professions to “retool” their license to school psychology.
- Iowa SCRIPT: A collaborative effort among the Iowa DE, higher education institutions and community colleges to integrate family centered practices into programs for children with disabilities ages 0-8. Activities include training parents as presenters, training preservice faculty on the needs and perspectives of families, and disseminating information to service providers about family needs. The family-centered focus of Iowa

SCRIPT is integral to and aligned with all of the work of the grant-funded diversity focus of the PTI.

- Natural Allies: Iowa is one of eight states working with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC on *Natural Allies: Working with Community Colleges to Prepare Personnel to Provide Quality Services for All Young Children in Natural Environments*. The Natural Allies project develops, implements, evaluates, and disseminates a model that will yield change and improvement in community college coursework and practical experiences related to serving young children with disabilities in inclusive settings.
- Higher Education Database: In order to improve communication between the Iowa DE and the preservice sector, Iowa launched an e-mail database initiative in 2001. The DE invited all preservice faculties in Iowa institutions of higher education to participate in this communication endeavor. Of the approximately 400 full-time educational faculty, some 350 registered to receive the service. The database is used to invite faculty to IDEA and NCLB workshops, to disseminate information about policies and procedures, and to seek feedback from faculty on their needs.
- A statewide system through which paraeducators can receive credentials in a number of service areas including special education.

In addition to these projects addressing personnel issues, Iowa has implemented a statewide program to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students as required in Iowa's federally approved Eligibility Plan (See Page 4 of this application). The four-year-old program, entitled Success4, has supported efforts of schools to collaborate with families and communities to meet the social, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual needs of students. This initiative is

currently undergoing a “redesign” to reframe it within the present day context of accountability for student achievement. The redesign is coordinated with the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD), a collaborative of youth serving state agencies and organizations that subscribe to common outcomes for Iowa children and youth contained in the ICYD Results Framework. In the coming year, pilot sites will begin to implement systems of learning supports for all children and youth with full implementation scheduled for the 2005-06 school year.

Because personnel and systemic needs in all of the above areas are being addressed by current activities that are producing positive outcomes, Iowa’s SIP grant-funded activities focus on areas with higher needs outlined in the vision, goals and objectives of this application.

***Needs Section: Recruitment and Retention Study***

Anecdotal data indicate that factors in Iowa special education teacher shortages include high attrition and challenging recruitment rates. However, Iowa currently collects no quantitative or qualitative data on attrition rates of special education teachers or other key retention and recruitment factors.

A component in Iowa’s proposed SIP is a recruitment and retention study to examine the staffing trends of special education teachers. The objective of this study is to generate an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers. The study will download data from Iowa’s Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) system in which each teacher has an identification number. The numbers will be tracked from year to year to determine how long special education teachers remain in the special education field. “Leavers” (those who leave special education teaching) will be tracked to see if they enter the general education-teaching field. Recruitment trends will also be examined. If Iowa data mirror national trends in high attrition rates and challenging

recruitment rates for special education teachers, a qualitative examination of the causes of these trends will be implemented. Once causes are determined, Iowa will consider state-level policy and procedural issues and will disseminate regional data to school districts to help them consider local needs.

This study will also help Iowa consider personnel needs related to the recent shift in teacher licensure requirements in Iowa. The licensure move from course credit to demonstrated competencies has implications for not only recruitment but for retention.

### ***Need Section: Parents as Partners***

An essential component to increasing the success of students with disabilities is to work in partnership with parents and other family members. Research overwhelmingly demonstrates the positive impact of parental involvement on children's academic achievement. According to Berta and Henderson (1994) "The evidence is now beyond dispute. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life."

Recognizing the key nature of parental involvement in student success, the Iowa DE for 19 years has supported the Parent Educator Connection (PEC), a nationally recognized model for partnering family members with educators. The PEC, with paired parent and educator consultants at each of Iowa's 12 intermediate agencies (AEAs), works in concert with Iowa's Parent Training Information Center (PTI), a federally-funded parental support agency.

The PTI will support Iowa's vision of reducing the achievement gap between students with disabilities and those without disabilities by offering training and support to those culturally diverse families who have students with disabilities and need culturally relevant information and resources to serve their special needs in helping their child to succeed. The PTI will link families to appropriate school and community supports.

PTI has generated a network of supports and resources in its years of serving Iowa parents and other family members. Their numerous referrals and contacts with family members speak to their ability to reach these critical family partners. In 2003, the Iowa PTI made over 8,000 contacts through telephone calls, one-to-one consultations (problem solving), trainings, letters and meetings. The PTI had over 2731 parents attend IDEA trainings and 1450 professionals serving children with disabilities attended trainings and presentations.

The agency has served a key role over the past five years as a partner in Iowa's 1997-2003 SIG by adding a culturally diverse component to its program. As a result of SIG support, over 790 individuals served by PTI were from culturally diverse families in 2003. This impact is largely due to the SIG-funded culturally diverse staff persons available to serve families and conduct culturally competent IDEA related trainings.

In this new grant-funded initiative, PTI will continue to partner with the Iowa DE and Iowa's PEC to reach families of minority racial backgrounds (such as African-American or Native-American) or for whom English is a second language (such as Hispanic or Vietnamese families). These families often face increased barriers when they have a child with a disability. Data indicate culturally diverse children must meet the challenges of cultural differences as well as the challenge of their disability. The achievement levels of the total culturally diverse student population indicate a significant discrepancy from their peers as indicated by the data below.

Table 14: Reading Comprehension 2001-03: Percent of Students At or Above Proficient Level by Race/Ethnicity — Using 2000 Norms

	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Total
Grade 4	78.6	48.4	52.6	75.5	60.6	75.9
Grade 8	72.0	35.9	43.0	68.6	49.2	69.3

	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Total
Grade 11	78.6	49.7	53.5	75.1	62.5	77.0

Source: Iowa Basic Educational Data Survey, 2003

Table15: Reading Comprehension 2001-03: Percent of Students At or Above Proficient Level by Primary Language Status — Using 2000 Norms

	ELL	English	Total
Grade 4	40.6	76.7	75.9
Grade 8	27.2	69.9	69.3
Grade 11	31.6	77.5	77.0

Source: Iowa Basic Educational Data Survey, 2003

Table 16: Mathematics Proficiency 2001-03: Percent of Students At or Above Proficient Level by Race/Ethnicity — Using 2000 Norms

	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Total
Grade 4	77.8	42.7	53.0	80.0	55.8	75
Grade 8	74.4	33.0	42.9	76.7	48.3	71.6
Grade 11	81.1	43.8	52.8	78.6	61.3	79.2

Source: Iowa Basic Educational Data Survey, 2003

Table 17: Mathematics Proficiency 2001-03: Percent of Students At or Above Proficient Level by Primary Language Status — Using 2000 Norms

	ELL	English	Total
Grade 4	45.4	75.7	75.0
Grade 8	34.3	72.0	71.6
Grade 11	39.8	79.6	79.2

Source: Iowa Basic Educational Data Survey, 2003

Although Iowa currently has no data “dually disaggregated” by disability and cultural diversity, the above tables on reading and math proficiencies for racially diverse students and ELL students indicate students from many of Iowa’s culturally diverse backgrounds achieve at lower levels than their peers. The conclusion that can be drawn is that students who face challenges of both disabilities and cultural diversity need supports in both of those areas. Subsequently, support from the PTI for parents and families of students with disabilities from culturally diverse backgrounds have the potential to meet a significant need.

The importance of parent and family support is further substantiated by data collected in 2003 by the PTI. In 2003 a randomly selected group of 50 families (including a representation of culturally diverse families) who received PTI services were sampled. Results, which indicated that existing needs are being met, were as follows:

- 96% of the parents surveyed felt the assistance they received from the PTI was helpful.
- 80% of the parents said the individual assistance they received from PTI Iowa helped them obtain some of the services they felt their child needed in order to be successful in school.
- 80% of parents said they felt more confident about working with school personnel after speaking to the PTI.
- 80% of the parents attending a workshop believed their child received more appropriate service because the parent used the information from the workshop.
- 84% of the parents who received assistance felt they could not have received this service had the PTI not been available.

These data indicate that PTI has recognized and is responding to needs. In the coming years, the agency plans to continue assessing and addressing the needs of families of children with

disabilities. While continuing to serve all of these families, the PTI will focus grant-funded efforts to offer culturally relevant support and training using PTI ethnically diverse staff and community supports.

### **Significance**

#### ***Significance Section: Systemic nature of each of the SIP components***

The greatest strength of Iowa's SIP is the systemic nature of each of the initiatives (detailed below) and their ability to move the state toward the vision of the proposal.

**Research-based Instruction for Striving Learners (Non-Responders):** This program is designed to increase the skills of middle and high school reading teachers and elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically based instructional strategies. The Striving Learners program will utilize an unprecedented (in Iowa) approach that targets the majority of the efforts towards improving reading and math achievement for struggling students at middle and high school levels. (The exception is that the math initiative will target elementary and high school levels because the current Every Child Counts program addresses middle school needs.) In Iowa middle and secondary grade levels have long been neglected with the majority of efforts focused at the elementary levels. Middle and high school teachers will complement their content expertise with scientifically based instructional strategies specifically geared towards preteens and teens. The elementary math component will fill the "gap" that is currently not addressed by Every Child Counts.

Additionally, the initiative will build the capacity of Iowa's AEA (intermediate agency) staff to provide professional development and technical assistance to LEAs in reading and math using a design calling for training of joint AEA and LEA teams (see Project Design Section).



**EC Quality Standards:** The long term systemic effects of this program designed to increase the capacity of early childhood programs to meet Iowa's Quality Standards are far reaching. Currently, many Iowa preschools are reluctant to integrate students with disabilities in their settings because they feel staff does not have the knowledge or expertise to serve these young children. The implementation of quality standards into Iowa's preschool systems will not only ensure that all children have an appropriate preschool experience, but will also expand the capacity of Iowa's preschools to meet the special needs of children with disabilities. The long-term result will be increased success for young children with disabilities and will advance Iowa's vision of decreasing the math and reading achievement gap between children with disabilities and those without disabilities.

**Strategist I Network:** This program designed to increase the competence of special education teachers by assisting Class C teachers to achieve their full professional status is an enhancement and expansion of the previous MCR-REI initiative. The systems capacity building nature of this program is substantial. The program will accelerate the implementation of Iowa's new competency-based licensure system in addition to expanding the program to include participants all colleges and universities in the state who offer the Strategist I endorsement. The result will be an unprecedented partnering among all colleges and universities to reach all geographical areas of the state and address one of Iowa's greatest needs in Class C endorsements.

**Recruitment and Retention Study:** Iowa's proposed recruitment and retention study to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers will be the state's first hard look at data to address recruitment and retention factors for special education teachers. Iowa has long relied on anecdotal data and national

research (SPENSE, NASDSE, etc.) to consider recruitment and retention issues. The results of the study will be the first Iowa-specific looks at staffing trends of special education teachers. It holds promise to change the way Iowa recruits and supports special education staff. It also holds promise to provide qualified teachers to assist Iowa in reaching the SIP goal and vision.

**PTI Multicultural Program:** The historical success of Iowa's parent program designed to assist multicultural parents of children with disabilities to work as partners with educators and the state's increasing number of minority families are the foundation for this proposal. As Iowa's demographics change to reflect a growing minority and non-native English speaking population, the needs of these groups grow. The last 12 years has shown an 8.6% increase in Iowa minority population (Sosa, 2001). PTI has formed an outreach program staffed with representatives of both non-native English speakers and of minority groups to assist families of children with disabilities from diverse backgrounds to access the services they need. The systemic effect of this program includes the ability of Iowa's new populations to assimilate into Iowa's culture and Iowa's educational system. Increasing those children's chances of success and achievement are the focus of this innovative work.

***Significance Section: Federal and State Systemic Issues***

Iowa's plan meets the Government and Performance and Results Act (GPRA) through its focus on the absolute priority of the application which "supports state educational agencies (SEAs) and their partners in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transition services for professional development, technical assistance and dissemination of knowledge about best practices to improve results for children with disabilities." That priority is Goal 8 of GPRA. All of Iowa's initiatives utilize professional

development, technical assistance and dissemination of information (see Management Plan Section) to advance the GPRA goal.

The five initiatives which are shaped around the five objectives of Iowa's SIP will utilize the following statewide initiatives and programs to move their work into the statewide system of educational communities.

#### *Project Easier*

Each of Iowa's proposed SIP projects needs ready access to aggregated and disaggregated data in such areas as student achievement, dropout rates, graduation rates, areas of geographical need and other relevant data. The utilization of Iowa's new student information system entitled Project Easier will provide a new systemic approach to data aiding in identifying needs and developing formative and summative evaluations.

Iowa is in the development and pilot stages for Project Easier, a student identification system that will facilitate the transmission and access of student information among school districts, area education agencies, postsecondary institutions and the Iowa Department of Education. The system will work in concert with Iowa's current electronic information system in order to avoid duplication while simultaneously gathering new and relevant data to facilitate better decision making for all educational agencies that serve students.

#### *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*

Iowa's Approved NCLB (ESEA) Accountability Plan is based on these principles:

- Support for Iowa's current philosophy of continuous improvement by expecting all school districts and all school buildings to improve student performance.
- Maintenance of Iowa's current policy that schools and school districts are the entities primarily accountable for student performance.

- Support for the local district responsibility for the development of content standards and benchmarks.
- Support for the development of local assessment systems that can effectively drive instruction.

An executive study of Iowa's approved Accountability Plan for No Child Left Behind can be found in the Appendix.

***Significance Section: The State Report Card for NCLB, August, 2003***

The data in Iowa's 2003 NCLB State Report Card revealed a critical middle and high school need that the Striving Learners SIP component for increased math and reading achievement will address.

The report noted that Iowa students improved in six out of eight indicators of student success, and 12 schools were listed as Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA). Ted Stilwill, Iowa Director of the Department of Education, in response to the report, called for continued efforts in the elementary levels and for an increased expansion and focus "to address the achievement levels in middle and high school." Iowa's proposed SIP Striving Learners project will assist the Iowa Department of Education in meeting the challenge issued by the DE director. Additionally, as part of the PTI's overall effort to assist culturally diverse families of students with disabilities, the agency will distribute materials to families about NCLB testing requirements and options (alternate, with accommodations, without accommodations) in order to help the families work as partners with educators in making assessment decisions.

Iowa's SIG-funded efforts will also work in concert to support Iowa's approach to meeting the needs of schools designated as in need of assistance (SINA). In Iowa, a SINA system is immediately set in place to provide aid and support to these schools. The resources from Iowa's

SIG funded projects such as the Striving Learners initiative and the Strategist I teacher credentialing initiative will contribute to and integrate with the support systems for SINAs.

Iowa's SIP Quality Standards program for early childhood links to the early childhood segment of NCLB "Good Start, Grow Smart." In signing this initiative President George. W. Bush said: "We must make sure that every child enters school ready to learn – every child – not just one, not just a few, but every, single child." This is especially critical for Iowa's young children with disabilities. Research supports serving preschoolers with IEPs in inclusive settings. "Children in inclusive preschools tend to have an advantage in social and behavioral areas over children in segregated programs" (Buysse & Bailey, 1993).

As outlined in the Needs Section, Iowa meets the qualifications set forth by NCLB for highly qualified teachers because Iowa requires that all teachers hold a valid teaching license. However, Iowa will continue efforts to improve the quality of teaching and to meet personnel needs through the following SIP initiatives.

- Strategist I — Assist Strategist I teachers (formerly MCR teachers) who hold Class C endorsements to attain full endorsements.
- Recruitment and Retention Study — Improve recruitment and retention efforts for special education teachers through the use of data from the proposed recruitment and retention study.
- EC Quality Standards — Improve the skills of early childhood providers through the Quality Standards project for early childhood programs.

#### *The Seven Components of Iowa's Teacher Quality Act (TQ)*

One of the most systemic approaches to Iowa's SIP is the alignment of the grant components with Iowa's Teacher Quality (TQ) Act, a revolutionary legislative policy and procedural shift that is changing the way teachers are prepared, inserviced, assessed, and compensated. The act

responds to Iowa's vision of improving student learning, as well as the critical issues regarding adequate supplies of fully qualified teachers. The TQ Act consists of the following seven major components.

*1. TQ Iowa Professional Development Model:* The rigors of Iowa's Iowa Professional Development Model, a component of the TQ Act, will be integrated into all skill development activities in the SIP. The model focuses on improving student learning and engages all educators in collective professional development. The intent of the model is to provide a structure for professional development that is focused, collaborative, and that directly supports the district's goals for student achievement.

The model was established in response to state and federal legislation, current trends in education, and research, and overwhelming evidence that well designed staff development, fully integrated with effective school improvement practices, can increase student learning.

The process that results in student learning involves teachers and administrators in the collective study of student data, goal setting, determining content, designing training/learning opportunities, and using data to measure targeted outcomes, guiding training decisions, and evaluating the program. The Iowa Professional Development Standards establish expectations for the implementation of this process.

*2. TQ Iowa Professional Development Standards:* Iowa's SIP initiatives will utilize the Iowa Professional Development Standards that are a requirement of the TQ Act. Those standards call for research based staff development practices and demonstrated proficiencies in skill development. The standards call for professional development practices that:

- Align with the Iowa teaching standards and criteria;

- Deliver research-based instructional strategies aligned with the student achievement goals established by the district;
- Deliver professional development training and learning opportunities that are targeted at instructional improvement and designed with: Student achievement data and analysis; theory; demonstration and practice; observation and reflection; teacher collaboration and study of implementation; and; integration of instructional technology, if applicable. The model also requires an evaluation component that documents the improvement in instructional practice and the effect on student learning.

3. *TQ Iowa Teaching Standards:* Each of the objectives in Iowa's SIP will align with Iowa's required teaching standards that are the foundation for teacher inservice, evaluation, and compensation. Teachers in Iowa must meet the teaching standards, listed below, to obtain and maintain their Iowa teaching credentials. This powerful legislation provides a strong foundation for moving towards the goal and vision of Iowa's SIP.

- Demonstrates ability to enhance academic performance and support for and implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
- Demonstrates competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position.
- Demonstrates competence in planning and preparing for instruction.
- Uses strategies to deliver instruction that meets the multiple learning needs of students.
- Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
- Demonstrates competence in classroom management.
- Engages in professional growth.
- Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

Because these Teaching Standards and Professional Development Standards are now a foundational component of Iowa's educational system, all SIP skill development strategies — inservice approaches for the Striving Learners objective and for the EC Quality Standards objective and preservice methodology in the SIP Strategist I Network program — will adhere to the scientifically-based nature of the standards.

4. *TQ Iowa Content Network*: The focus on improving teacher effectiveness and raising student achievement through the use of scientifically based research (SBR) is fundamental to the successful implementation of the NCLB Act and Iowa's SIP proposal to improve results for students with disabilities. The law requires knowledge and application of scientifically based research in the curricular areas of reading, mathematics and science, instructional methods and strategies, and professional development.

Iowa's Content Network was formed to assist with implementation of the "scientifically based research" component of NCLB. It is a web-based tool for local districts to use when selecting professional development content in reading, mathematics, and science. The site includes reviews of research studies that describe research conducted on specific instructional strategies and programs. The site also includes ideas for selecting content, resources, and links to other sources of information about scientifically based research practices. The application of this network resource is clearly outlined in the Project Design Section for the Striving Learners initiative. The resource actually consists of three "sub-networks" in reading, mathematics and science. The purposes of the networks are:

- To help local districts to attain their goal(s) for increasing student achievement.
- To provide local districts and AEAs with a resource for identifying strategies that are research-based and have the potential for implementation in Iowa school settings.



- To support the implementation of the Iowa Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program and to address the requirements of NCLB.

The Content Network process utilizes teams of Iowa educators who have read and analyzed scientifically conducted studies and rated them using rigorous criteria. The teams have identified content that meets the NCLB requirement of “scientifically-based research” as well as other content that shows promise for increasing student achievement but which at the present time does not meet all the criteria laid out by NCLB. The teams follow a strict definition of scientifically based research that calls for:

(A) research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs; and

(B) research that —

(i) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;

(ii) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;

(iii) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;

(iv) is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls;

(v) ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and

(vi) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.

Only those strategies that meet the Content Network definition of scientifically based research will be utilized in SIP strategies to increase the skills of Iowa teachers.

*5. TQ Data Driven Leadership:* The data driven leadership model, also a component of the TQ Act, requires administrators to be trained in and demonstrate the ability to disaggregate student data by subgroups and to address needs as a result of data analysis. As a result of this legislative requirement, Iowa's SIP vision to decrease the achievement gap among students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be integrated into a systemic leadership initiative that will be a driving force in advancing toward the vision.

*6. TQ Wages and Mentoring/Induction:* Iowa's SIP component that seeks to recruit and retain appropriate service providers for students with disabilities will be able to take advantage of the compensation package of the TQ Act that provides supportive funding for a minimum beginning teacher salary of 28,000. The TQ Act also requires a two-year mentoring and induction program for all new teachers. The mentoring program, with its focus on research-based instructional practices and the retention of qualified staff, will support the SIP recruitment and retention components of the Strategist I Network and the Recruitment and Retention Study.

*7. TQ Evaluation:* Iowa's SIP skill development for teachers will utilize Iowa's innovative approach to teacher evaluation, a competency-based model tied to Iowa's teaching standards (see above). All administrators have been trained in the model and follow the guidelines of the

legislated teacher evaluation component of the TQ Act. The model provides opportunities for teachers at different developmental stages to be involved in processes and activities appropriate to their experience and expertise. In addition, teacher evaluation is heavily focused on the formative aspects of evaluation, using staff-directed activities for the purpose of promoting professional development, especially development focused on improving student achievement as determined by district.

***Significance Section: Additional Systemic Links***

*Competency-based Licensure:* The Strategist I Network initiative and the Recruitment and Retention Study will take advantage of a competency-based licensure system to consider and assess the quality of Iowa's teaching staff. In 1999-2000, Iowa launched a program to change accreditation requirements of teacher preparation institutions to a competency-based licensure program. The change has required institutions to move from an emphasis on course credits to a skill-based program through which teachers must demonstrate state-approved competencies in licensure and endorsement areas to receive their credentials. This approach is providing a new generation of teachers who have demonstrated skills in meeting the needs of all students.

*Teach Iowa:* The Recruitment and Retention Study will examine the capability of Iowa's web-based teacher recruitment site to assist in meeting Iowa's special education personnel needs. Currently, more than 90 percent of Iowa school districts and area education agencies use Teach Iowa, the Iowa Department of Education teacher recruitment web site, to post job openings. Currently, some 2800 potential candidates are registered for the service that automatically sends email notices of new job openings. The site can be accessed at [www.iowaeducationjobs.com](http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com).

## **Quality of Project Design**

*Extent to which the goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable*

*Measuring Vision Outcomes:* Iowa's SIP was shaped by measurable goals, objectives and outcomes. The outcomes are linked directly to the vision of reducing the achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities. Outcome measures for that vision are detailed in the evaluation section and focus on student achievement data (See Evaluation Section).

*Measuring Goals and Objectives:* The following goal and objectives will be assessed through performance measures as outlined in the Management Plan (See Management Section). The performance measures are directly linked to the activities outlined to achieve the goal and reach the objectives. Performance measures will also be integrated into all contract work through the use of "performance contracts," a requirement of Iowa's Accountability in Government Act.

*Goal:* To ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to prepare parents of students with disabilities to work as partners with educators.

*Objectives:*

- To increase the skills of middle and high school reading teachers and elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically based instructional strategies;
- To increase the capacity of early childhood programs to meet Iowa's Quality Standards;
- To increase the competence of special education teachers by assisting Class C teachers to achieve their full professional status;

- To generate an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers (Recruitment and Retention Study); and,
- To assist culturally diverse parents of children with disabilities to work as partners with educators.

*Extent to which the design of project is appropriate to, and will successfully address the needs of the target population or other identified needs*

*Appropriate and Targeted:* Iowa's comprehensive needs assessment (see Needs Section) found student achievement as measured in reading at the middle and high school levels and math at the elementary and high school levels is the areas of highest need for students with disabilities. The Iowa SIP targets efforts toward teachers to improve their instructional skills in reading and math (Research Based Instructional Strategies for Striving Learners) and toward early childhood programs (EC Quality Standards initiative) to ensure quality standards and a successful early start in education. As the Need Section outlines, teacher competency is a key factor in student achievement. That research ensures the appropriateness of the programs targeted at Class C teachers (Strategist I Network) and at recruiting and retaining qualified staff (Recruitment and Retention Study). The PTI program is appropriately geared towards culturally diverse families in that it is based on research that indicates parental involvement is a key factor in student success (see Needs Section) and on student achievement data for culturally diverse students (see Needs Section) that reflects a growing need.

*GEPA:* In accordance with section 427 of the U.S. Department of Education General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), which calls for equal access to and participation in programs for individuals with disabilities and other diverse needs, the Iowa DE and other partners provide a variety of accommodations. Interpreters for individuals who are deaf are arranged through a

private interpreting agency and funded by the Iowa DE. Braille needs are met through an agreement between the Iowa DE and the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School. The Iowa DE web site, which provides a variety of materials and resources individuals with disabilities, is Bobby-approved. Additionally, the following practices are followed in order to make the web-site accessible.

- Most of the web site is in TEXT format to allow for enhanced web browser software to interpret text.
- Superfluous images are kept to a minimum.
- Any graphic images are tagged with a text-based identifier.
- Audio and video files are requested for each text submission

Additionally, an active partner in Iowa's SIP is the Iowa's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI). Within the PTI is a specific program focused on reaching families from African American, Latino, and Native American communities and families who live in poverty or isolation. (See Project Design Section on Parents as Partners.)

For those individuals who speak languages other than English, the DE foreign language library will be utilized. In the library, located at <http://www.mynclb.com>, a multitude of products and documents for individuals with disabilities are available in 23 different languages.

Additionally, the Iowa DE's web site is available in eight different languages.

*Extent to which the activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field*

As indicated in the Significance section, Iowa will utilize the Iowa Professional Development Model to implement all skills development activities. The model, required for district staff development by Iowa's Teacher Quality Act, includes: Professional Development Standards, Teacher Quality Standards, Content Networks, Mentoring and Induction, Data-based Leadership

Data, and Evaluation. The use of this statewide systemic model ensures a coherent and sustained program of training.

*Extent to which the design of the project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice*

***Project Design: Research-Based Instructional Strategies for Striving Learners***

Iowa's SIP calls for increasing the skills of middle and high school reading teachers in order to achieve the vision of reducing the achievement gap between students with disabilities and those without disabilities. The reading based component of Iowa's SIP for Striving Learners will build upon Iowa's Reading First Program, which encompasses the state's work on reading development (Every Child Reads and Reading Excellence) at the elementary level. Instructional strategies utilized by the program include the components of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary to the repertoire of comprehension strategies. The focus of the expansion is not only designed to include more grade levels, but also to target efforts toward Iowa's students with disabilities. The SIP reading initiative will also utilize and expand upon Iowa's state and local systems in place to improve reading achievement as follows:

- The AEA/DE Struggling Reader Planning Team is a planning group that includes representatives from each of the AEAs and the DE. The group's charge is the development of an action plan for building capacity within the Iowa's kindergarten through grade 12 educational system to support the implementation of research-based instructional practices in reading for students who are not succeeding in the classroom even when presented with high quality, evidence-based instruction.
- The Statewide Reading Team includes education consultants, both special education and general education, from the area education agencies and instructional leadership personnel,

both building principals and central office staff from local education agencies, who are cooperatively engaged in a common professional development effort to build the state's capacity to use current strategies research-based instructional and assessment practices in reading at the elementary level. The team's membership will be expanded to a K-12 representation in order the SIP reading initiative into middle and high school levels.

- The AEA Reading Teams are teams of educational consultants, both special education and general education, within AEAs that are responsible for supporting local education agencies in the development and implementation of a comprehensive reading program that is research-based. The teams extend the capacity of each AEA and more importantly represent the means for “getting to scale” in the implementation of research-based instructional and assessment practices in local education agencies.

Iowa's SIP mathematics initiative will expand the state's Every Student Counts program to include elementary and high school math teachers. Every Student Counts, currently targeted towards improving student math achievement in middle school, utilizes scientifically based instructional strategies in a cooperative professional development effort among the AEAs and the DE. The initiative provides professional development on instructional practices in mathematics that are research-based, align with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' standards-based instructional practices, specifically focusing on instructional strategies that develop conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and productive disposition. As with the SIP reading initiative, the focus of the math expansion is not only designed to include more grade levels, but also to target efforts toward Iowa's students with disabilities. Also as with the reading initiative, the math initiative will utilize statewide research based systems to implement the plan.



- The AEA/DE Capacity Building Team for Mathematics is a planning group that includes representatives from AEAs and the DE. The group's membership includes representation from the educational services and special education directors of the AEAs, mathematics consultants from the AEAs, the DE, and institutions of higher education. The group's charge is the development of an action plan for building capacity within the state to support the implementation of research-based instructional practices in mathematics, including students who are not succeeding in the classroom even when presented with high quality, evidence-based instruction or non-responders.
- AEA Mathematics Consultants, consisting of representatives from each of the AEAS and DE, are organized to identify the gaps between Iowa's current instructional practices and student achievement in mathematics, and matching research-based instructional practices to identified student achievement needs. The group has studied state and local student achievement in mathematics, and identified the instructional models, strategies and programs that are the focus of current professional development efforts.

Iowa's innovative Content Networks and Iowa Professional Model, described in detail in the Significance Section, will guide the instructional strategy decision-making and skill development of the Striving Learners reading and math initiatives.

While Iowa's Reading First Program specifically addresses reading at the primary level (kindergarten through grade 3), and provides foundational knowledge about comprehensive reading programs to special education teachers, grades 4 through 12, the state's grade 8 and 11 achievement data in reading for various student subgroups indicate a clear need to attend to middle and high school students who continue to struggle with reading as well as those students who have been non-responsive to current classroom and supplemental instruction.

A similar circumstance exists in the area of mathematics. The state's current mathematics effort focuses on the middle school, but the data for students with disabilities indicates a clear need to expand the effort to include research-based instructional practices for students with disabilities at the elementary and high school levels.

To address this challenge, regional professional development sequences in both reading and mathematics will be provided to local education agency teams of general education and special education teachers, and administrative personnel. Educational program consultants, both general education and special education, from each team's respective area education agency will participate in all aspects of the professional development sequences. By using teams of general and special education local school instructional and administrative personnel, the effort will capitalize on the benefits accrued from cross-role learning, and school wide or district wide pursuit of a clear student need with an instruction-focused solution.

By including AEA personnel with the local school teams, the effort will build capacity within the system to sustain quality professional development and technical assistance to local education agencies across the state. By engaging site-based teams rather than individuals, the professional development sequences will develop learning communities that provide opportunities for teachers, administrators, and area education agency personnel to support each other in learning and implementing new instructional practices.

For the professional development sequences in reading, the local education agency teams will include middle and high school special education and general education instructional personnel to assure continuity across the secondary level. For the mathematics sequences, the local education agency teams will include elementary and high school special education and general education instructional personnel. By pairing elementary teachers with high school

teachers for the mathematics sequences, the effort will be able to capitalize on the content knowledge of high school mathematics teachers and the pedagogical knowledge of elementary teachers. In both content areas, the professional development sequences will build learning communities that provide opportunities for teachers, administrators, and area education agency personnel to learn together and engage collective solving of specific problems of practice.

Grant funds will be used to support local education agency teams in their participation in the training sequences and implementation of the instructional models and programs. The costs for AEA personnel participation will be absorbed by each area education agency.

All the professional development sequences will engage the Iowa Professional Development Model in both design and delivery. The sequences will (1) target improvement in instructional practice for the purpose of accelerating student achievement, (2) include processes and tools for teams to actively engage in ongoing, meaningful study of student achievement and implementation data, and (3) include theory, demonstration and practice for each instructional model or program. Each year, multiple instructional models or programs will be presented in reading and mathematics, providing area education agencies and participating local districts and schools the opportunity to focus on specific, identified local student and instructional needs.

In addition to the professional development sequences with the local education agency teams, area education agency consultants and local education agency instructional leaders will attend “summer academies” to extend and deepen their knowledge and expertise in structured school improvement for accelerating student achievement, the Iowa Professional Development Model, and the research-based instructional models and programs. The academies will further prepare the consultants and instructional leaders for providing professional development and technical assistance to other local schools teams.

To support the AEA consultants and local education agency instructional leaders in their capacity building efforts with other school teams, training and support materials will be developed to facilitate capacity building efforts. An instructional designer will participate in the initial training sequence of each instructional model or program presented, and in consultation with professional development providers, develops professional development modules and support materials for the consultants and instructional leaders to use as they train additional local school teams. The materials will be web-based and include video streams of various demonstrations of the instructional models or programs. The grant budget covers the cost of the instructional designer; the Department will assume the production, maintenance, and dissemination costs of the professional development materials.

The selection of the specific research-based instructional models or programs to be included in the professional development sequence will be based on the recommendations from the Content Networks and various area education agency/Department planning teams described earlier. The first year's development and training sequence will include Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (Mathes, et al., 1998; Fuchs, et al., 1997; Mathes, et al., 1994; Mathes & Fuchs, 1993), a research-based classroom process for supporting struggling learners that is appropriate for either content area and various grade levels, and differentiating instruction (Brimijoin, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000) which is also appropriate to both content areas and all grade levels. In addition, Collaborative Strategic Reading (Klinger, Vaughn, & Schumann, 1998; Vaughn, et al., 1998; Klinger & Vaughn, 1996), Cognitive-Oriented Reading Instruction (Guthrie & McCann, 1997; Guthrie, et al., 1997; Guthrie, 1996), and the Strategic Instruction Model (reading strategies) of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning Institute for Effective Instruction will be included in the first year training sequences. In mathematics, the foundation

for the professional development sequences will be the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' standards (Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, 2000; A Research Companion to Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, 2003) that include strategies for early identification of students who are struggling and the provision of immediate and appropriate supplemental instruction. The professional development sequences will focus on enhancing both content and pedagogical knowledge with particular emphasis on instructional strategies and models that develop conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and productive disposition.

***Project Design: EC Quality Standards***

If the learning curve is going to change for students to be successful in school (meet proficiency for reading and math skills), quality preschool learning experiences must be provided for children prior to attending kindergarten. Quality preschool experiences for children is the link to helping every child enter school ready to learn as President George W. Bush has emphasized with the early childhood component of the No Child Left Behind legislation "Good Start, Grow Smart." Research repeatedly demonstrates that those children in quality care and education settings prior to entering school have increased academic achievement skills. In addition, quality early education is the most cost-effective and efficient way to prepare children to succeed in school and life.

As described by the recent publication, *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, released by the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, "Higher quality care is associated with outcomes that all parents want to see in their children, ranging from cooperation with adults to the ability to initiate and sustain positive exchanges with peers, to early competence in reading and math." Quality preschool experiences

are especially critical for young children with disabilities. Research supports serving preschoolers with IEPs in inclusive settings. “Children in inclusive preschools tend to have an advantage in social and behavioral areas over children in segregated programs (Buysse and Bailey, 1993).

The EC Quality Standards Program will increase the number of quality preschool experiences available in five southeast AEAs of the state for children with disabilities by implementing state standards, completing evaluation of programs, and providing technical assistance to improve implementation of quality standards. In order to accomplish this ambitious plan, the initiative will focus on expanding the capacity of EC care and education systems to enhance quality preschool experiences for children 3- to 5-years-old to be ready for school.

Prior to initiation of the grant, early childhood state consultants will select Early Childhood Quality Program Standards, define criteria to describe the Standards, and develop a self-assessment tool for preschool providers to complete. (Preliminary work has been started - see Appendix).

#### *Year 1: Awareness Training*

Based on the LRE data as described in the Need section, 50 early childhood programs within five geographic boundaries of Iowa’s area education agencies (AEAs) will be targeted for this improvement. Targeted programs will include:

- Preschools operated by local school districts, including Title I preschools;
- Early Childhood Special Education programs operated by local school districts or;
- Preschools supported by community empowerment area (CEAs) funds; and
- Community based early childhood programs.

- It is projected that 200 community-based early childhood (CBEC) staff, including teachers, assistants, and directors will be involved in the training.

#### *Training of AEA staff*

- AEA early childhood staff responsible for integrating children with disabilities in the community based early childhood programs will be identified and provided awareness training of the Early Childhood Quality Program Standards, directions for program staff to complete a self-assessment, and technical assistance to meet state Standards.
- Convene an ad hoc committee composed of representatives from Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR), AEA ECSE Leadership Network, AEA Early Childhood Network, Head Start, Community Colleges, Community Empowerment Areas, Shared Visions, ISU Extension, and parents. The committee will critique the self-assessment instrument based on the DE developed *Early Childhood Program Standards* and criteria.
- Identify early childhood trainers in each of the AEA geographic regions. Also, identify community college early childhood staff to be involved with ongoing trainings to infuse the standards, rubric and technical assistance training into their coursework to prepare future early care and education providers.
- The identified trainers will attend a two-day “Train the Trainer” workshop. This workshop will address the EC Program Standards, the rubric, the self-assessment and strategies for implementing quality standards training.
- Contract with Camille Catlett, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center to conduct the workshop and include training for adult learning, consultation, and change strategies.
- Trainers will replicate training to their assigned community based early childhood programs within their AEA geographic regions.

### ***Project Design: Strategist I Network***

In August 2004, the Iowa MCR endorsement will be moved to a Strategist I endorsement in order to reflect new licensure requirements that focus on demonstrated competencies rather than successful completion of classes within a course of study (Strategist I Core Competency Requirements are in Appendix). In order to reflect the new licensure and expand geographic opportunities of the current MCR-REI program (see Needs Section), the new Strategist I Network will be formed.

The Strategist I Network holds the potential to systemically change teacher preparation programs, especially in teacher shortage areas, so that institutions can collaborate for the benefit of Iowa's students. The Strategist I Network will:

- Include all interested institutions of higher education that have mild/moderate programs for special education.
- Coordinate and align competency-based coursework from all these institutions.
- Coordinate program offerings from various institutions to ensure that participants are afforded distance-learning opportunities ensuring equal access to the competency-based instruction they need.
- Maintain a toll-free telephone number and email address for the Counselor/Advocate to ensure that interested participants receive prompt responses to their requests for information.
- Recruit program participants throughout the state through the use of intermediate educational agencies, regular communications with superintendents and principals, traditional recruitment efforts of participating institutions of higher education, the Teach Iowa website, referrals from the Board of Educational Examiners, and other methods.



- Determine programs for all participants that can be accessed from multiple sites, from multiple institutions, and through various media. Offer support for timely completion of requirements through coordination of coursework among all participating institutions.
- Refer candidates who have successfully demonstrated the required competencies to the Board of Educational Examiners for a Class C endorsement.
- Collect data on program participants to ensure that they have achieved the competencies required by licensure.
- Develop and maintain an electronic data system that regularly collects information from all participating institutions to monitor student/program success.
- Oversee the coordination of this effort to ensure its alignment with other educational initiatives (Iowa's Professional Development Model, etc.) over the life of this grant.

The Strategist I Network varies from the MCR-REI program in two important ways. First, this program is no longer based on successful completion of coursework. The licensure requirements are based upon competencies and, therefore, will require a new approach to collaboratively meeting the needs of program participants.

The second big difference in this program is that it no longer represents a collaborative between the Iowa Department of Education and the Regents institutions. Instead, the challenge will be to include ALL interested teacher preparation institutions in the state. This will open the door to unique and innovative opportunities for smaller colleges to use their resources more efficiently to serve a greater number of students. In turn, this results in increased opportunities for teachers to access the instruction they need to become licensed for mild/moderate special education. And finally, this initiative will serve as a model for other teacher shortage areas in the state as well as across the nation.

The value of this effort will be twofold. First it will address the greatest teacher shortage area for the State of Iowa and improve the educational opportunities for students with disabilities by ensuring that they have qualified, well-educated teachers. Second, it will create a higher education collaborative model that could be replicated for other teacher shortage areas and in other states.

***Project Design: Recruitment and Retention Study***

Iowa's Recruitment and Retention study is based on the Kansas Department of Education Attrition Study which has successfully calculated attrition rates of special education teachers for several years.

The design of the study originated with the Kansas model and then was expanded and revised to accurately assess Iowa trends and reflect Iowa characteristics. The study was designed through the work of a planning team consisting of the Iowa DE Data and Research Analysis Administrator, the DE Assistant Administrator for Special Education Data Analysis, the DE Part B CSPD Coordinator, the DE SIG Project Director, and a higher education research and data analysis expert. The design will guide the study to accomplish the objective of generating an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers.

The study will begin in the first year of the grant with quantitative data collection and by the third year of the grant, will be piloting a qualitative data collection instrument. The two-fold purposes guiding the study include a quantitative analysis (Purpose 1) and a qualitative analysis (Purpose 2) as follows:

*Purpose 1: To determine the extent to which retention patterns contribute to the shortage of special education teachers*

The following research questions will guide Purpose 1:

- a. Are there differences in retention rates between rural and urban districts?
- b. Are there differences in retention rates between districts (buildings?) with high minority enrollments (rate to be determined) and those who do not have high minority enrollments?
- c. Are there differences in retention rates between districts with high Free and Reduced Lunch rates (rate to be determined) and those who do not have high FRL enrollments?
- d. Are retention rates impacted by special education teachers who transfer to general education?
- e. Are retention rates impacted by special education teachers who leave the Iowa teaching field?
- f. Are there differences in retention of teachers in special education assignments?

*Purpose 2: To determine factors that increases retention and recruitment of special education teachers.*

The following research questions will guide Purpose 2 to gather qualitative data:

- a. Why did first year teachers choose the special education teaching assignments?
- b. For those teachers who stayed the average (to be determined) or past the average, what induced them to stay?
- c. For those teachers who left, why?

d. What are the major factors that contribute to the shortage of special education teachers?

—Supply (number trained and number who enter and remain in profession)

—Demand (number of job openings, Class C endorsements issued)

This study intends to examine the recruitment and retention rates of Iowa special education by starting with 2001–02 and 2002–03 data to examine the percentage of:

- Iowa teachers with special education assignments in the PK–12 system who are leaving special education annually
- Iowa teachers who move among districts within Iowa
- Iowa teachers who change assignments within special education (e.g., from BD to multi-categorical) in Iowa
- New teachers who enter the field in what categories of districts: categories to include student enrollment, Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) rates, minority enrollments, and urban versus rural
- Iowa teachers who will be retiring within 5 years, 10 years, 15 years

The targeted population for the study includes all special education teachers in Iowa serving PK–12<sup>th</sup> grades, including those employed by accredited LEAs, AEAs, hospitals, residential facilities, and penal and/or juvenile justice institutions. Those not included are licensed early childhood teachers employed by private or local not for profit preschools not affiliated with the local public school district. “Leavers” will be defined as those who leave the field of special education teaching.

*Process to implement study*

Under the guidance and implementation of the four-person planning team, the initiative will identify all teachers with special education assignments using assignment and position codes. Data will be disaggregated, formatted and analyzed by the planning team.

The higher education research and data analyst, who has agreed to contract for the work, will design a program to download the data from the Iowa DE data system. The program will be uniquely designed to disaggregate and analyze Iowa teacher assignments and district characteristics. With the assistance of the DE planning team, the researcher will analyze trend data, consider hypotheses and refine the program as needed. In the first and second years of the project, data collection and analysis will be refined with a trend line established.

In the first year of the project, the data will go to internal audiences such as DE leadership and staff for feedback and refinement of process. In the second year of the project, information will be disseminated to a broader audience as it is analyzed more thoroughly and hypotheses are developed about the staffing trends of special education teachers. That broader audience will include such external stakeholders as AEAs, school districts, Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa, and Iowa State Education Association. Their feedback about the system and emerging data will be collected. The information will also be used for OSEP and NCLB reporting requirements as appropriate.

The third year of the program calls for ongoing data collection and analysis. The planning team will then develop additional quantitative hypotheses and consider hypotheses about the causes of the emerging trends. A consultant will be contracted to design qualitative instruments such as surveys to examine causes for attrition and recruitment factors. Once the qualitative instruments are developed, they will be piloted to determine their effectiveness. The pilot will also examine avenues for finding “leavers” (those who have left the teaching field) in order to

survey them. Those who have moved to general education teaching will remain in Iowa's database and will be surveyed for the causes of their move from special education.

At the end of the third year, the planning team will develop a new budget and consider funding sources to sustain the project. Additionally, if the data provide substantial recruitment and retention information at this time, the committee will organize a statewide effort to consider recruitment and retention strategies.

Iowa intends that this project become an "institutionalized" program. The wealth of information to be gathered will be an invaluable source as Iowa considers special education personnel needs and trends.

***Project Design: PTI Culturally Diverse Parents as Partners***

The PTI parents as partners project will build upon the historical success of the past SIG PTI activities, which also focused on the growing needs of minority families, and families whose native language is not English. The children of these families face the dual challenge of a disability and cultural diversity. As data in the Needs Section indicate, the achievement levels of students with just one of these challenges are far below that of their peers. The success of PTI's five-year program on meeting the needs of these families (outlined in the Needs Section) will guide the coming years.

The PTI has designed its program for culturally diverse families to not only respond to requests for information and resources, but also as an outreach program for these families who are often unaware of their options, rights, and available resources.

In PTI's current program to reach culturally diverse population, African-American families and Spanish-speaking families have emerged as primary recipients of PTI resources. In response to these needs, PTI has designed activities that reflect the needs of their target population. All of

grant activities are provided through multicultural staff, one of whom speaks fluent Spanish and who conducts discussion groups in Spanish for parents of children with disabilities.

As a result of this careful design to meet the needs of these culturally diverse families, PTI activities will include:

- A triage parent listener to refer families to the appropriate support, information or training to assist in child-find, conflict resolution and parent support.
- A coordinated system of Parent-to-Parent information,
- A collaborative system of service support through the PEC, PTI, Health Information Center, Child Health Specialty Clinics and Iowa Foster and Adoption
- Discussion groups for families whose native language is Spanish to improve relationships with school personnel and increase family involvement at the building level.
- In a plan to increase PTI staff awareness of cultural issues, all staff will participate in training on “ethno-stress.”

In addition to these specially designed activities, the PTI will provide a wide array of supports that are integral to their work with all families of children with disabilities. Such supports include one-to-one consultation on disability-specific issues, referral to appropriate resources including health services, social services, legal services, training, and information dissemination.

*Extent to which project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population*

*Center for Teacher Quality:* Iowa is working with the Center for Teacher Quality (CTQ), a project supported by the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Association of State Directors of Special Education, to consider ways to integrate special education standards of the Council for Exceptional Children into general education teacher licensure in the state. Iowa

currently has participants in the CTQ to represent the needs of higher education, the State Board of Educational Examiners, the state consultant for CSPD, and the state consultant for accreditation of teacher preparation. The Iowa work with CTQ is being integrated into Iowa's new competency standards for general and special education teacher licensure. Additionally, Iowa has a legislatively funded program to integrate scientifically based instructional practices into inservice systems in the state. The CTQ has become an integral partner in all of these Iowa ventures.

*OSEP Communities of Practice:* Iowa's partnership with the OSEP Communities of Practice project is carried out through participation of key consultants in specific content areas. These consultants network with their colleagues in other participating states to share information about promising practices related to increasing the success of students with disabilities. Iowa consultants participating in the Communities of Practice disseminate the promising practices research to appropriate DE coordinators of projects. That practice will be expanded to include all SIP lead coordinators as recipients of the promising practices related to their grant-funded work.

Additionally, Iowa will partner with and utilize research from the following nationally known and respected groups and projects: Great Lakes Regional Resource Center; National Association of State Directors of Special Education; the IRIS center at Vanderbilt's Peabody College; and SIGNetwork.

*Extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning to support rigorous academic standards for all students*

Iowa's comprehensive approach to improving teaching and learning (as described in the Significance Section and Project Design Section) will support district academic standards for students. As indicated in the Significance Section, Iowa's approved NCLB Accountability Plan is



based on the development of stringent academic standards developed at the local level and assessed through the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development. Each district is also required to have a second form of assessment to measure aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to determine progress towards district standards. Districts are required to set goals of making progress towards achieving the standards and benchmarks and must report the progress to the Iowa Department of Education annually. All related SIP projects will, by necessity, link to and support the standards and benchmarks in the districts participating in the grant projects.

### **Quality of Project Personnel**

Iowa Department of Education has a well-qualified, multi-skilled team to direct and coordinate all SIG activities. The depth and breadth of skills and experience will ensure Iowa's successful implementation of all five initiatives outlined in this grant application. The project manager and each project coordinator was chosen for their depth of expertise in the project field and each holds at minimum a masters degree. Resumes (see Appendix) detail areas of expertise and experience of key personnel proposed for the project.

In Iowa the AEA system provides all of the local implementation for Department of Education's initiatives and have a long history of quality service to LEAs. Two SIG initiatives (Research-based Instruction and Early Childhood Quality Standards Initiatives) use AEA professional development and content (math, reading, EC) consultants to train and support LEAs through technical assistance and follow-up coaching. All AEA consultants in Iowa have a minimum of a master's degree in their area of expertise and many have experience that includes classroom teaching in LEA, school administration and IHE teaching. By training and utilizing AEA resources our initiatives will build local capacity and keep support readily available to

teachers and administrators as projects transition from SIG funding to sustained efforts to improve results for Iowa's children.

*Applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability*

Iowa's application for the State Improvement Grant proposes using current staff as project coordinators and contracting with Area Education Agencies and state university personnel to implement the five initiatives. This plan allows for the building local capacity to sustain projects beyond the term of the grant. All contracted personnel will be subject to the Department of Education's policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion creed, age or marital status in all programs and employment practices.

The Department also takes several proactive steps to increase the employment of persons from under represented groups. These activities include:

- Advertising in a variety of newspaper nationwide
- Posting information regarding job openings on the Departments web site
- Sending notices regarding job openings to colleges and institutions of higher education with high minority enrollments
- Maintaining standing advertisements in employment journals and newspapers targeted toward minority job-seekers

*The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.*

Key project personnel include the SIG Director and project coordinators who are all Department of Education staff assigned to SIG projects (these positions are funded through matching funds).

**SIG Project Director– Diane Accola (0.5 FTE)**

Currently, Ms. Accola serves as the SIG project director for the SIG Iowa received in 1999.

She is responsible for ensuring all activities are completed and annual reporting of progress toward grant goals and outcomes. She has 10 years experience in program management and evaluation. Additionally she serves as department consultant for program evaluation and works with a wide variety of Department –sponsored projects. Ms. Accola has a B.S. degree in early childhood education and M.A. degree in public administration.

**SIG Project Evaluator– Tom Stinard (0.1 FTE)**

Dr. Stinard will serve on the DE Evaluation team which will coordinate and oversee each initiative's evaluation by (1) consulting with project evaluators to review their plans and monitor annual reports; (2) collating all evaluations and aligning with project outcomes to produce annual reports; (3) meeting with DE leadership and stakeholders to update them on grant progress toward goals and realign initiate activities to ensure success; (4) publish annual and final grant evaluation reports.

Dr. Stinard currently serves a DE Evaluation Consultant. He supervises quality control of federal reports; advise on data collection and retrieval for statewide special education database; consult on alternate assessment and general assessment for children with disabilities as related to No Child Left Behind; conduct program evaluations; statistical analyses. He has a Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation, Iowa State; M.S. in School Psychology, Iowa State; and a B.S. in Zoology and Psychology, Iowa State University.

**SIG Project Evaluator – Mary Sullivan (0.1 FTE)**

Ms. Sullivan will serve on the DE Evaluation team which will coordinate and oversee each initiative's evaluation by (1) consulting with project evaluators to review their plans and monitor annual reports; (2) collating all evaluations and aligning with project outcomes to produce annual reports; (3) meeting with DE leadership and stakeholders to update them on grant progress

toward goals and realign initiate activities to ensure success; (4) publish annual and final grant evaluation reports. Ms. Sullivan has postgraduate, a M.S. in Education and Philosophy and a B.S. in Statistics and English all from Iowa State University.

**SIG Project Evaluator – Kathy Hinders (0.1 FTE)**

Dr. Hinders will serve on the DE Evaluation team which will coordinate and oversee each initiative's evaluation by (1) consulting with project evaluators to review their plans and monitor annual reports; (2) collating all evaluations and aligning with project outcomes to produce annual reports; (3) meeting with DE leadership and stakeholders to update them on grant progress toward goals and realign initiate activities to ensure success; (4) publish annual and final grant evaluation reports.

Dr. Hinders currently serves as the DE Consultant for Assessment and Decision-making. Her main responsibilities include assisting AEAs and LEAs establish district wide standards-references assessment systems aligned with their local educational standards. Dr. Hinders has a BS in Elementary Education and Mental Disabilities (University of Iowa), MS in Education/Learning Disabilities and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Iowa State University).

*The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.*

**SIG Project Coordinator (Research-based Instruction)– Kathy Hinders (0.4 FTE)**

Dr. Hinders currently serves as the DE Consultant for Assessment and Decision-making. Her main responsibilities include assisting AEAs and LEAs establish district wide standards-references assessment systems aligned with their local educational standards and providing technical assistance to LEA reading teams and AEAs on Iowa's Reading First Initiative. In working with local reading teams, Dr. Hinders assists with developing team building, training,

and implementation of instructional strategies targeted to improve reading achievement.

Additionally Dr. Hinders analyzes teacher implementation and student achievement data in order to develop on-going staff development in each LEA and performs other evaluation activities for the DE. She has five years of classroom teaching and four years of University teaching experience. Dr. Hinders has a BS in Elementary Education and Mental Disabilities (University of Iowa), MS in Education/Learning Disabilities and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Iowa State University).

**SIG Project Coordinator (Research-based Instruction) – Kathy McKee (0.4 FTE)**

Ms. McKee is the DE Consultant for Special Needs Mathematics and Science/Environmental Education. She has twenty-five years of experience as a classroom teacher and has taught as an adjunct professor at Drake University, Grandview College and University of Northern Iowa. Ms. McKee was the state winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching in 1998. She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and MS in science education both from University of Northern Iowa.

**SIG Project Coordinator (EC Quality Standards) – Mary Schertz (0.3 FTE)**

Ms. Schertz is an Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Consultant with the DE. She serves as consultant to AEAs and LEAs regarding ECSE programming. Other responsibilities include collaborating with multiple agencies regarding EC programming, coordinating 619 CSPD activities and Iowa's Supporting Changes and Reform in Interprofessional Preservice Training (SCRIPT) and Natural Allies initiatives. Ms. Schertz has a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in Child Development and a MS. in Learning and Mental Disabilities from Northwest Missouri State University.

**SIG Project Coordinator (EC Quality Standards) – Dee Gethmann (0.3 FTE)**

Ms. Gethmann currently serves as Early Childhood Consultant for the DE. Her main tasks include coordinating statewide initiatives to improve quality early care and education services for families and children in local communities. Ms. Gethmann serves on the Iowa Empowerment board, which coordinates a variety of programs services for families and children. Ms. Gethmann has many years of experience as an early childhood educator and Early Access Service Coordinator. She has bachelor degree from Iowa State University and a masters degree from University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana – both are in Early Childhood Special Education.

**SIG Project Coordinator (Strategist I Network) – Jane Todey (0.3 FTE)**

Jane Todey has been project coordinator for most of the five-year grant period for the Multi-categorical Resource – Regents’ Endorsement Initiative (MCR-REI), the predecessor to this project. She has developed a working relationship with the University Coordinators in the Regents Institutions and has initiated a relationship with several other private institutions that prepare special education teachers. Ms. Todey has an understanding of what how this project will function, issues that need to be addressed to ensure its success, and what will be needed for data collection to sustain the project beyond the three years of this grant. Ms. Todey holds the following degrees: ED.Sp. in Educational Leadership, M.S.E. in Guidance & Counseling and B.M.E. in K-12 Vocal Music Education all from Drake University.

**SIG Project Consultant (Strategist I Network) – Jane Heinsen (0.1 FTE)**

Ms. Heinsen serves as the special education consultant in licensure. Her main responsibility is to provide information about the special education licensure standards to Iowa and non-Iowa applicants who are requesting special education endorsements. She participates in student teaching seminars at the teacher preparation colleges/universities discussing practitioner rights, responsibilities, practices and ethics. She works with college/university special education faculty

concerning special education endorsement programs. She has served thirteen years in this position. Her area of expertise is to provide administrators and practitioners with accurate information about the special education licensure standards. She also meets with officials from out-of-state colleges/universities to facilitate the licensure process for applicants from these institutions. Ms. Heinsen holds a BA degree in speech and language pathology and a MA degree in elementary education and special education. She has previous experience as a speech pathologist and elementary special education teacher.

**SIG Project Coordinator (Recruitment/Retention Component) – Norma Lynch (0.3 FTE)**

Ms. Lynch currently serves as Staff Development Consultant and CSPD Coordinator for DE. Her main duties include: coordinating Iowa's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) for educators and service providers for school age children, providing consultation on staff development projects, addressing recruitment and retention issues, organizing conferences and other special events, facilitating large and small group meetings, and planning and implementing multiple projects and programs. Accomplishments include planning and implementation of a web-based teacher recruitment project entitled *Teach Iowa*, assistance with the planning, writing, and implementation of Iowa's State Improvement Grant, and compilation of a college and university faculty data base designed to enhance communication between the Department of Education and the preservice sector. Ms. Lynch holds a Master of Arts with major in English from Iowa State University and Bachelor of Arts with major in English from Grinnell College. She holds a secondary teaching certification with endorsements in journalism and English and taught high school for 10 years.

**SIG Project Coordinator (Parent Training Initiative) – Deborah Samson (0.1 FTE)**

Ms. Samson will be responsible to coordinate activities with the PEC and PTI to ensure that parents have the information and support necessary to participate fully in their child's IEP processes and education.

Ms. Samson plans, implements and facilitates parent-related support activities for the 60 coordinators providing direct service in the PEC program, which includes coordinating with educator-related support activities. She is a parent of a child with disabilities, a licensed nurse and holds a BA in sociology from Iowa State University.

#### *Responsibilities and Qualifications of Support Staff*

The following positions serving the SIG grant will be contracted positions. Where possible the incumbents' qualifications and responsibilities are listed. Where the position is to be filled upon securing the grant, the proposed responsibilities and qualifications are listed.

#### **Research-based Instruction Initiative – Administrative Support for Evaluation and Data**

The administrative support staff will be responsible for (1) establishing and managing databases and data entry; (2) scheduling workshops and making necessary workshop arrangements; and (3) general secretarial duties (preparation of correspondence; documents and reports; proof-reading documents for accuracy, grammar, and spelling; maintain calendars; schedule appointments; and arranging for travel) for the project coordinators.

The individual must be proficient in the use of Microsoft Office, knowledgeable of general office procedures, demonstrate good communication skills, able to interpret and follow oral and written instructions, and able to work with minimal supervision and limited direction.

#### **Research-based Instruction Initiative – Instructional Designer**

The contracted instructional designer, with guidance from the Department's project managers, will: (1) translate the content of the professional development units into coherent,



integrated instructional modules and sequences for use by school-based teams;(2) identify the specific media formats to present the content of the units and various modules; (3) design specifications for the various media formats, such as video productions, graphics, photography, and CD-ROM, and potential “web-based” delivery of various components; (4) develop the specifications for the packaging and duplication of the materials; (5) coordinate development and production efforts with the vendor responsible for the production of the materials; (6) maintain regular and open communication and working relationships with the Department’s staff; (7) maintain regular and open communication and working relationships with content specialists or experts who may be called upon to assist with the development and delivery of content; and, (8) provide the Department’s Project Director with the required documentation and progress reports that will be specified in the contract for service.

The instructional designer must: (1) have a master’s degree in instructional design and technology; (2) be experienced in the use of Adobe, Macromedia, and Microsoft Office software; (3) have documented success in working with teams of individuals on multimedia projects; and (4) have documented experience in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with project directors/managers, and content specialists and experts.

### **Early Learning Quality Standards Initiative - Project Evaluation**

The contracted project evaluator will be an early childhood specialist from an Institute of Higher Education. The responsibilities include: (1) constructing an evaluation plan; (2) developing data collection definitions and procedures manual; (3) designing tools for accurate data collection; (4) training personnel in data collection methods; (5) collating and analyzing and interpreting CBEC program Self-Assessment data; (6) reporting results as needed for program planning and revisions; (7) constructing annual and final project evaluation reports.

The project evaluator must: (1) have at minimum a master's degree in early childhood; (2) be on faculty at an IHE; (3) have experience in the use of data management and Microsoft software; (4) have documented success in working with teams of individuals in early childhood projects; and (5) have documented experience in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with project directors/managers, and content specialists and experts.

### **Strategist I Network Initiative - Project Evaluation**

The contracted project evaluator will be an contracted from an Institute of Higher Education. The responsibilities include: (1) constructing an evaluation plan; (2) developing data collection definitions and procedures manual; (3) designing tools for accurate data collection; (4) training personnel in data collection methods; (5) collating and analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative program data; (6) reporting results as needed for program planning and revisions; (7) constructing annual and final project evaluation reports.

The project evaluator must: (1) have at minimum a master's degree or be a masters candidate; (2) have experience in the use of data management and Microsoft software; (4) have documented success in working with teams of individuals; and (5) have documented experience in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with project directors/managers, and content specialists and experts.

### **Strategist I Network Initiative – Counselor/Advocate**

Mike Cavin has acted as Counselor/Advocate for the MCR-REI program for the past year. His responsibilities include: (1) advising students; (2) coordinating course offerings; (3) transcript evaluation; (4) data collection; (5) and serving on the advisory board. Additionally in his capacity as Counselor/Advocate, he has worked closely with the program coordinator and the consultant from the Board of Educational Examiners to ensure that the program is successful and

program participants receive the coursework they need in a timely fashion. Under his leadership, the program has run effectively and served participants efficiently.

Mr. Cavin is currently a Ph.D candidate at the University of Northern Iowa and holds M.A.E. in Special Education Work Experience Coordination, Learning Disabilities, Multi-Occupational Co-op (University of Northern Iowa); BA in Psychology, minor Philosophy and Teaching Certification in Psychology.

### **Strategist I Network Initiative – Administrative Support**

The administrative support staff will be responsible for (1) general secretarial duties (preparation of correspondence; answering telephone; preparing documents and reports; proof reading documents for accuracy, grammar, and spelling; maintain calendars; schedule appointments; and arrange meetings) for the counselor/advocate (2) establishing and managing data entry.

The individual must be proficient in the use of word processing and data management software, knowledgeable of general office procedures, demonstrate good communication skills, able to interpret and follow oral and written instructions, and able to work with minimal supervision and limited direction.

### **Recruitment and Retention Initiative - Data Analyst**

Gary Phye, Ph.D., Professor of Curriculum & Instruction and Psychology at Iowa State University will direct the analysis of teacher endorsement and position raw data provided by the DE Bureau of Research and Planning. His responsibilities are to: (1) design a program to download and analyze data; (2) pilot and modify program; (3) provide ongoing data collection and analysis to track trends; (3) report findings to committee.

Dr. Phye received his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Missouri. Gary has published extensively in the top research journals in his area (Journal of Educational Psychology, Contemporary Educational Psychology, etc.). In addition he has written or edited several books on the topics of academic learning, assessment and educational research methods. He is a past president of the Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association and in 1998, the American Psychological Association conferred upon him the distinction of Fellow of the association in recognition of outstanding and unusual contributions to the science and profession of psychology. Dr. Phye has developed and taught several graduate level courses in research methods and statistics for the social sciences and education while at Iowa State University. He has published research articles that have employed descriptive statistics, factorial ANOVAs, MANOVAs, Multiple and step-wise Regressions, Longitudinal designs with repeated measures, Path Analyses and Causal Modeling using GLM, Nonparametric Statistics and Meta-analyses.

#### **Recruitment and Retention Initiative – Survey Designer**

The responsibilities include: (1) constructing an survey instrument; (2) developing data collection definitions and procedures manual; (3) designing tools for accurate data collection; (4) piloting the survey and making appropriate revisions collating and analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative program data; (5) reporting results as needed for program planning and revisions; (6) constructing annual and final project evaluation reports. Qualifications include: (1) evaluation specialist or faculty from an Institute of Higher Education (2) extensive experience in developing and implementing surveys; (3) minimum of masters degree in educational psychology, statistics, evaluation or similar discipline.

#### **Parent Training Information Parents as Partners Initiative**

PTI will work with the Iowa DE to plan and implement parent training specific to all of the SIG objectives (see Management Plan for detail). All planning and training activities conducted by the PTI will meet the quality requirements of the DE. The PTI designated staff will be responsible for all logistical arrangements of contracted parent support and training activities. In addition, the PTI will conduct ongoing formative and summative evaluation data as required by the Project Coordinator and DE Evaluation Team.

### **Adequacy of Resources**

#### *Support, facilities, equipment and other resources*

The Iowa Department of Education is centrally located in Des Moines and is committed to providing the needed resources to carry out the State Improvement Grant. As the recipient of SIG funding in the competitive first round of grants, Iowa demonstrated its commitment and success in supporting SIG initiatives. The DE will commit matching funds to support project staff time, materials and needed to expertise to ensure that intended outcomes are successfully achieved. The Proposed Staff Availability resource (Appendix) and Person Loading Chart (Appendix) describe the level of effort staff will commit to this project.

Much SIG activity is to be implemented at the AEA level, the local school district level and within institutions of higher education (IHEs). While significant SIG funds will be contracted to these partners for implementation of various SIP activities, each partner will necessarily commit significant resources of their own to ensure that SIP activities integrate with their on-going activities.

In addition to adequate staff and organizational support, this project will continue to utilize the advice, experience and input from the State Special Education Advisory Panel and the

Coordinating Council for Part C for needs assessment and other support for activities funded by SIG.

The state's Iowa Communication Network is available to make meetings and trainings accessible across Iowa. With state provided Internet and email access allowing for rapid communications and information sharing to all AEAs and LEAs in Iowa, the DE project coordinators can monitor their project activities and be available to project contracted personnel and participants. The AEA system provides regional meeting and training space, media libraries to hold and share curriculum materials and a variety of highly skilled professionals to support student achievement and parent participation.

The Partnership Agreements contained in the describe the partners and their appropriateness to various activities. The partners have demonstrated their commitment to this project and its outcomes by signing the agreements and through their historic support of DE initiatives.

#### **Adequacy of budget**

The SIG budget was developed to ensure systemic and long-standing changes in the education of students with disabilities, the teachers who serve them and parents who support them. All initiatives are planned to integrate with other educational priorities in Iowa and with the NCLB focus on student achievement and highly qualified teachers. The scope of project activities have been carefully designed and sequenced to use existing educational systems (AEAs) and supports (Iowa Professional Development Model and Content Network) to allow for efficient use of budget dollars and to leverage both state and other federal programs. The budget was developed conservatively to balance fiscal responsibility with the opportunity to create needed change focused on improving student achievement for students with disabilities and those with no disability. The budget reflects the use of existing staff , structures and facilities to

maximize impact with our reasonable grant request. The budget detail describes this relationship and the planned SIG expenditures.

*Cost reasonable in relation to objectives, design and significance*

Each activity was carefully designed to produce results leading to achievement of the project goal and vision. Usual and appropriate costs for each contracted activity were budgeted with the aforementioned leveraging of existing facilities and personnel. Performance measures are appropriate and will keep the project on track to ensure that resources are used appropriately and effectively. Annual evaluation reports will assist project coordinators to realign activities to maximum impact effectively, yet efficiently. The focus on professional development of both early learning, special and general education teachers will give Iowa's students (pre-school through high school) access to improved instructional practices and produce achievement gains for all students, especially those with disabilities. If each teacher serves an average of 20 students, thousands of students will be served in the coming three years. This makes the cost of quality instruction for each student very reasonable.

*Sustainability of project support*

The purpose and goal of Iowa's SIP have been highly integrated into Iowa's educational priorities and strategies. Each initiative uses existing educational systems and focuses on building local capacity to improve the academic achievement of all students and their parent support. Utilizing partners from local schools to higher education gives this project the opportunity to change systems and work with the state's entire educational system. As these initiatives provide the impetus for improving the system, they also "teach" and give practice to those systems to sustain efforts beyond the three years of the grant. The SIP is a set of activities that play a large role in the implementation of Iowa's Part B Improvement Plan and the

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. With these systems view, Iowa plans to sustain the improvements in the future and strengthen the educational system to continue the efforts outlined in the grant.



## QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

*Adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks*

Iowa's SIP Management Plan is designed to advance toward the following vision and goal:

**Vision:** The achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced.

**Goal:** To ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to prepare families of students with disabilities to work as partners with educators.

The detailed table below clearly defines the grant objectives, activities, timelines and performance measures, which focus all initiatives on achieving the grant outcomes within the proposed timeframe. Each task has performance measures that allow for tracking milestones and give leadership and coordinators data to inform progress toward objectives and make needed adjustments. The table gives each initiative a working plan that is logically sequenced for each year of the grant and provides a checklist for accomplishment of tasks needed to reach the goal.

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
Objective A. Increase the skills of middle and high				

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
<p>school reading teachers and elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically-based instructional strategies</p> <p><b>Objective A.1 (Reading)</b></p> <p>Increase the skills of middle and high school reading teachers by expanding the use of scientifically-based instructional strategies</p>	<p><b>Reading - Year 1</b></p> <p><b>A.1.1</b> Statewide reading team (SWRT) develop detailed professional development sequence and timeline for each of the scientifically-based instructional practices</p> <p><b>A.1.2</b> Contract with instructional designer and</p>	<p>SWRT</p> <p>Cynthia</p> <p>Kathy H</p> <p>Cynthia</p>	<p><b>Reading - Year 1</b></p> <p><b>A.1.1</b> Document: Written plan</p> <p><b>A.1.2</b> Documents: Contract</p>	<p><b>A.1.2.</b> Curriculum is aligned with Iowa</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>develop professional development materials for PALS, CSR, and differentiating instruction and collaborate with Iowa Content Network</p> <p><b>A.1.3</b> Develop data management system for collecting and analyzing teacher and student performance data. Design evaluation.</p> <p><b>A.1.4</b> Complete production and disseminate the</p>	<p>Kathy H Tom S Data tech. staff (to be hired)</p> <p>Cynthia SWRT</p>	<p>Curriculum materials</p> <p><b>A.1.3</b> Documents: Data dictionary, reports. Written plan for both formative and summative evaluation</p> <p><b>A.1.4</b> # materials disseminated</p>	<p>Content Network and Professional Development Model</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>professional development materials for PALS, CSR, and differentiating instruction</p> <p><b>A.1.5</b> Identify and train AEA professional development providers</p> <p><b>A.1.6</b> Identify LEA pilot sites and reading teams. Deliver professional development sequences for PALS, CSR, CORI, and SIM for school reading teams</p> <p><b>A.1.7</b> Collect and analyze implementation (teacher) and</p>	<p>Cynthia Inst. Designer</p> <p>AEA trainers</p> <p>Kathy H Tom S</p>	<p><b>A.1.5</b> # trainers prepared</p> <p><b>A.1.6</b> Baseline data, # sites identified, # teams trained</p> <p><b>A.1.7</b> Documents: accurate data reports</p>	<p><b>A.1.5</b> All trainers score 80% or better on training post test</p> <p><b>A.1.6</b> % of teams scoring 80% or better on post test scores</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>student performance data from LEA teams</p> <p><b>A.1.8</b> Adjust professional development plans for PALS, CSR, CORI, and SIM according to analysis of LEA team implementation and student performance data</p> <p><b>A.1.9</b> Instructional designer (ID) plan and develop curriculum for Years 2 and 3. ID do follow-up support and continuing in-service training</p>	<p>Data tech. staff (to be hired)</p> <p>SWRT Cynthia</p> <p>SWRT Instr. Designer</p>	<p><b>A.1.8</b> Document: revised written plan</p> <p><b>A.1.9</b> Documents: Written plan years 2, 3. Improved curriculum materials</p>	<p><b>A.1.9</b> Curriculum is aligned with Iowa Content Network Professional Development Model</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
<b>Objective A.2 (Math)</b>  Increase the skills of elementary and high school math teachers by expanding the use of scientifically-based instructional strategies	for LEA teams  <b>A.1.10</b> Identify LEA pilot sites to implement in year 2	Cynthia	<b>A.1.10</b> # sites identified.  Baseline data	
	<b>Reading – Year 2</b> <b>A.1.11</b> Update and maintain data management system. Evaluate. <b>A.1.12</b> Deliver professional development sequences to new LEA pilot site reading teams. Continue follow-up technical assistance and training for Year 1 LEA sites <b>A.1.13</b> Adjust professional	Kathy H Tom S Data tech AEA reading teams	<b>Reading - Year 2</b> <b>A.1.11</b> Documents: accurate data reports.  <b>A.1.12</b> Baseline data – new sites - # trainings. Existing sites - # TA sessions  <b>A.1.13</b> Document: written plans	<b>Reading - Year 2</b> <b>A.1.11</b> Evaluation report  <b>A.1.12</b> % year 1 teams using strategies in classrooms

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>development plans using implementation and student performance data</p> <p><b>A.1.14</b> ID develop professional development sequence and timeline - identified instructional model - Year 3</p> <p><b>Reading - Year 3</b></p> <p><b>A.1.15</b> Train trainers for Year 3 models/programs</p> <p><b>A.1.16</b> On-going professional development and technical support to LEA teams</p>	<p>AEA and LEA reading teams Instr. Designer</p> <p>Cynthia Instr Designer</p> <p>AEA reading teams</p>	<p>written plans</p> <p><b>A.1.14</b> Document: Written plan</p> <p><b>Reading - Year 3</b></p> <p><b>A.1.15</b> # trainers prepared</p> <p><b>A.1.16</b> # TA sessions - existing sites</p>	<p><b>Reading - Year 3</b></p> <p><b>A.1.16</b> % year 1 and 2 teams using strategies</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p><b>A.1.17</b> Deliver professional development sequences to new LEA teams. Continue TA and training for Year 1 and 2 LEA sites</p> <p><b>A.1.18</b> On-going collection of implementation (teacher) and student performance data from LEA teams and evaluation</p>	<p>AEA reading teams</p> <p>Kathy H Tom S Data tech</p>	<p><b>A.1.17</b> Baseline data – new sites, # new site trainings, # TA sessions - existing sites</p> <p><b>A.1.18</b> Document: updated data reports</p>	<p><b>A.1.17</b> % of team members scoring 80% or better on post test scores % year 1 and 2 teams using strategies</p> <p><b>A.1.18</b> Evaluation report. Outcome: The gap between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced in 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade reading as measured on the ITBS/ITEDS.</p>



Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p><b>Math -- Year 1</b></p> <p><b>A.2.1</b> AEA/DE Capacity Building Team for Mathematics and Iowa Content Network identify specific research-based NCTM standards-anchored instructional models and programs</p> <p><b>A.2.2</b> ID and Math Team develop professional development sequence and timeline for each identified instructional model or</p>	<p>AEA/DE Capacity Building &amp; Content Network Teams</p> <p>Instr. Designer Math Team</p>	<p><b>Math -- Year 1</b></p> <p><b>A.2.1</b> Documents: Standards, models, programs published for instructional design</p> <p><b>A.2.2</b> Document: Written plan</p>	<p><b>Math -- Year 1</b></p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>program</p> <p><b>A.2.3</b> ID design and disseminate curriculum materials for the Year 1 instructional models or programs</p> <p><b>A. 2.4</b> Develop data management system - student performance data, implementation data, and training participant data</p> <p><b>A. 2.5</b> Contract with and train AEA professional development providers in</p>	<p>Instr. Designer</p> <p>Kathy H Data tech</p> <p>Kathy M Inst. Designer</p>	<p><b>A.2.3</b> Documents: Curriculum materials, # curriculum materials disseminated</p> <p><b>A.2.4</b> Documents: Data dictionary, procedures, reports</p> <p><b>A.2.5</b> Document: Written contract, # trainers prepared</p>	<p><b>A.2.3</b> Curriculum materials aligned with Iowa Content Network and Professional Development Model</p> <p><b>A.2.5</b> % trainers score 80% or better on post test scores</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>math instructional models/programs</p> <p><b>A.2.6</b> Identify and train LEA math teams</p> <p><b>A.2.7</b> ID develop professional development sequence and timeline for Years 2 and 3</p> <p><b>A.2.8</b> Collect and analyze implementation and student performance data from participating LEA teams</p> <p><b>A.2.9</b> ID and planning team</p>	<p>AEA staff</p> <p>AEA trainers</p> <p>Instr. Designer</p> <p>Kathy H Tom S Data tech</p> <p>Instr.</p>	<p><b>A.2.6</b> Baseline data, # sites identified, # teams trained</p> <p><b>A.2.7</b> Document: Written plan</p> <p><b>A.2.8</b> Documents: accurate data reports</p> <p><b>A.2.9</b> Documents:</p>	<p><b>A.2.6</b> % LEA math teams scoring 80% or better on post test scores</p>

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
	adjust professional development plans and curriculum using data  <b>Math – Year 2</b>  <b>A.2.10</b> Update and maintain data management system for Year 2. Evaluate.  <b>A.2.11</b> Deliver professional development sequences to new LEA pilot sites school math teams. Continue technical assistance and training for Year 1 LEA sites  <b>A.2.12</b> Adjust professional	Designer  Math team   Kathy H Data tech  AEA trainers   Instr	accurate data reports,  revised curriculum   <b>Math – Year 2</b>  <b>A.2.10</b> Documents:  revised data system.   <b>A.2.11</b> Baseline data, # new sites identified, # new teams trained, # TA sessions with existing sites  <b>A.2.12</b> Documents:	       <b>Math – Year 2</b>  <b>A.2.10</b> Evaluation report.   <b>A.2.11</b> % new teams scoring 80% or better on post test, % year 1 and 2 teams using strategies in classroom   <b>A.2.12</b> Revised plan

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>development plans according to analysis of LEA team implementation and student performance data</p> <p><b>A.2.13</b> Develop a professional development sequence and timeline for each identified instructional model or program for Year 3. Train trainers.</p> <p><b>Math – Year 3</b> <b>A.2.14</b> Identify and deliver professional development sequences to new LEA pilot sites school math teams.</p>	<p>designer State Math team</p> <p>Instr designer AEA trainers</p> <p>AEA trainers</p>	<p>accurate data reports</p> <p><b>A.2.13</b> Document: written plan, # trainers prepared</p> <p><b>Math – Year 3</b> <b>A.2.14</b> # new sites identified, # new teams trained</p>	<p><b>A.2.13</b> % trainers scoring 80% or better on post test scores</p> <p><b>Math – Year 3</b> <b>A.2.14</b> % new teams scoring 80% or better on post tests</p>

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
	<p><b>A.2.15</b> On-going professional development and technical support to Year 1 and 2 LEA math teams</p> <p><b>A.2.16</b> On-going collection of implementation (teacher) and student performance data from LEA teams and evaluation</p>	<p>AEA trainers Inst. Designer</p> <p>Kathy H Tom S Data tech</p>	<p><b>A.2.15</b> # TA/support sessions</p> <p>Documents: Written data reports</p>	<p><b>A.2.15</b> % year 1 &amp; 2 teams using strategies in classroom</p> <p><b>A.2.16</b> The gap between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced in 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade math as measured on the ITBS/ITEDS</p>
<b>Objective B.</b> Increasing the capacity of early childhood	<b>Year 1</b>		<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 1</b>
	<b>B.1</b> DE ECSE Consultants	Early	<b>B.1</b> Document: Written	

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
programs to meet Iowa's Quality Standards	<p>finalize state EC Quality Program Standards</p> <p><b>B.2</b> DE ECSE Consultants train Quality Standards and assessment to targeted AEA EC staff and Community College instructors</p> <p><b>B.3</b> AEA professional development providers train 10 CBEC programs in their region on Quality Standards and Assessment</p> <p><b>B.4</b> Community Colleges infuse State Quality Standard Awareness training in course</p>	<p>childhood team</p> <p>Mary</p> <p>Dee</p> <p>AEA trainers</p> <p>CC instructors</p>	<p>standards, self assessment</p> <p><b>B.2</b> # trainers trained</p> <p><b>B.3</b> # participants trained</p> <p><b>B.4</b> # course curriculums including Quality Standards</p>	<p><b>B.2</b> % trainers scoring 80% or better on post tests</p> <p><b>B.3</b> % participant scoring 80% or better on post tests</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>Awareness training in course curriculum</p> <p><b>B.5</b> AEA trainers provide technical assistance (TA) on site to assist CBEC programs in completing Self-Assessment</p> <p><b>B.6</b> Contract with IHE - analyze and interpret CBEC program Self-Assessment data. Design curriculum sequence for program improvement.</p> <p><b>Year 2</b> <b>B. 7</b> Train trainers - AEA</p>	<p>AEA trainers</p> <p>Evaluator Mary Dee</p>	<p>Standards</p> <p><b>B.5</b> # completed self assessment</p> <p><b>B.6</b> Document: Written evaluation plan. Baseline data</p> <p><b>Year 2</b> <b>B.7</b> # participants trained</p>	<p><b>B.5</b> % sites in Iowa proficient on EC Quality standards</p> <p><b>Year 2</b> <b>B.7</b> % participants</p>



Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>professional development and Community College staff -- Module 1</p> <p><b>B.8</b> AEA professional development providers train 10 CBEC programs in their region on Module</p> <p><b>B.9</b> Community Colleges infuse Module 1 “ Materials and Activities” training in course curriculum</p> <p><b>B.10</b> AEA trainers schedule 4 hour site visits to provide coaching (follow-up) with</p>	<p>Mary Dee</p> <p>AEA trainers</p> <p>CC instructors</p> <p>AEA trainers</p>	<p><b>B.8</b> # participants trained</p> <p><b>B.9</b> # course curriculums incorporating new material</p> <p><b>B.10</b> # TA sessions</p>	<p>scoring 80% or better on post tests</p> <p><b>B.8</b> % participants scoring 80% or better on post tests</p> <p><b>B.10</b> % program staff using strategies</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>CBEC program staff</p> <p><b>B.11</b> CBEC program staff complete post-test Self-Assessment, analyzed by Evaluation Consultant</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p><b>B.12</b> DE ECSE Consultants provide training on Module 2</p> <p><b>B.13</b> AEA train 10 CBEC programs in their region on Module 2</p> <p><b>B.14</b> Community Colleges infuse Module 2 Training: Inclusion of Children with</p>	<p>CBEC staff Evaluator</p> <p>Mary Dee</p> <p>AEA trainers</p> <p>CC instructors</p>	<p><b>B.11</b> Document: evaluation report, # sites show improve</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p><b>B.12</b> # participants trained</p> <p><b>B.13</b> # participants trained</p> <p><b>B.14</b> # course curriculums including inclusion training</p>	<p><b>B. 11</b> % sites in Iowa proficient on EC Quality standards</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p><b>B.12</b> % participants scoring 80% or better on post tests</p> <p><b>B.13</b> % participants scoring 80% or better on post tests</p> <p><b>B.14</b> % increase in course curriculums including inclusion</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>Special Needs training in course curriculum</p> <p><b>B.15</b> AEA trainers schedule 4 hour site visits to provide coaching (follow-up) with CBEC program staff</p> <p><b>B.16</b> CBEC program staff complete post-test Self-Assessment and analyzed by Evaluation Consultant</p>	<p>AEA trainers</p> <p>CBEC staff</p>	<p><b>B.15</b> # TA sessions</p> <p><b>B.16</b> Document: evaluation report, # sites improving</p>	<p>training</p> <p><b>B.15</b> % staff using strategies</p> <p><b>B.16</b> % sites improving, # of Early Childhood Programs meeting Iowa's Quality Program Standards will increase by 50 as measured by the Quality Standards self assessment</p>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
<b>Objective C:</b> Increase the competence of special education teachers by assisting Class C (conditionally licensed) teachers to achieve full professional status (endorsement)	<b>Years 1, 2, 3: All activities are on-going</b>		<b>Years 1, 2, 3: On-going</b>	<b>Years 1, 2, 3: On-going</b>
	<b>C.1</b> Network convened institutions of higher education that have mild/moderate programs for special education	Norma	<b>C.1</b> # meetings held	<b>C.1</b> % Iowa colleges/universities participating
	<b>C.2</b> All coursework from network institutions coordinate and align competency-based coursework	Counselor Advocate Network team	<b>C.2</b> # of network IHEs - signed alignment agreements	<b>C.2</b> % of network IHEs - signed alignment agreements
	<b>C.3</b> Network IHEs coordinate program-offering	Counselor Advocate	<b>C.3</b> # program offerings serving each region, #	

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
	locations	Network team	students enrolled	
	<b>C.4</b> Counselor/Advocate serve participants – prompt responses to questions, concerns, needs, etc.	Counselor Advocate Norma	<b>C.4</b> # phone calls serviced, # emails responded to	<b>C.4</b> Average response time to requests (in number of days), % participants satisfied with service from CA
	<b>C.5</b> Recruit program participants via multiple methods	Norma Jane H Counselor Advocate	<b>C.5</b> # advertisements or recruitment efforts, # referrals made, # packets mailed	<b>C.5</b> % of referrals resulting in participant
	<b>C.6</b> Develop and maintain data system to collect information to monitor	Network Norma Counselor	<b>C.6</b> Documents: Data collection tools. Annual data reports	

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
	<p>student/program success</p> <p><b>C.7</b> Offer support for timely completion of requirements through coordination of coursework among all participating institutions.</p> <p><b>C.8</b> Refer graduates for Class C endorsement</p> <p><b>C.9</b> Alignment with other educational initiatives</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Counselor</p> <p>Advocate</p> <p>Network</p> <p>Jane H</p> <p>Norma</p>	<p><b>C.7</b> # participant survey responses</p> <p><b>C.8</b> # fully endorsed graduates</p> <p><b>C.9</b> Document: Written report</p>	<p><b>C.7</b> % positive participant survey responses</p> <p><b>C.8</b> # and % of Strategist I Class C endorsements</p> <p><b>C. 9</b> 95% of Strategist I teachers fully certified and endorsed by 2007</p>
<b>Objective D:</b> To generate an adequate data set to determine needs in recruiting and	<p><b>Year 1</b></p> <p><b>D.1</b> Develop data collection system</p>	<p>Norma</p> <p>Diane</p>	<p><b>Year 1</b></p> <p><b>D.1</b> Data dictionary and procedures</p>	<p><b>Year 1</b></p>

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities/Timelines</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Formative Performance Measures</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Outcomes</b>
needs in recruiting and maintaining a full complement of highly qualified special education teachers.	<p>system</p> <p><b>D.2</b> Contract with research/data analyst to design program to download and analyze data.</p> <p><b>D.3</b> Researcher pilots and modifies program</p> <p><b>D.4</b> RR Committee uses data reports to set baselines</p> <p><b>Year 2</b></p> <p><b>D.5</b> RR Committee reviews 1<sup>st</sup> year data and modifies analysis and data elements if necessary</p>	<p>Contractor</p> <p>Norma</p> <p>Contractor</p> <p>RR committee</p> <p>Norma</p> <p>RR committee</p>	<p><b>D.2</b> Written contract</p> <p><b>D.3</b> Initial report. Modifications</p> <p><b>D.4</b> Trend data report</p> <p><b>Year 2</b></p> <p><b>D.5</b> Updated data design/plan</p>	<b>Year 2</b>

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	<p>necessary</p> <p><b>D.6</b> Ongoing data collection and analysis</p> <p><b>D.7</b> RR Committee begins analysis of two-year trend data</p> <p><b>D.8</b> RR Committee designs report documents to begin sharing of initial findings. Preliminary data disseminated</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p><b>D.9</b> Ongoing data collection and analysis</p> <p><b>D.10</b> RR Committee develops hypotheses for emerging</p>	<p>Contractor</p> <p>Norma RR committee</p> <p>Norma RR committee</p> <p>Contractor</p> <p>Norma RR</p>	<p><b>D.6.</b> Data reports</p> <p><b>D.7</b> Trend data report</p> <p><b>D.8</b> # reports of initial findings disseminated. Collated feedback</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p><b>D.9</b> Data report</p> <p><b>D.10</b> Hypotheses report</p>	<p><b>D.7</b> Trend data report</p> <p><b>Year 3</b></p>



Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	hypotheses for emerging trends	committee		
	<b>D.11</b> Consultant contracted to design qualitative instruments	Contractor	<b>D.11</b> Document: Contract	
	<b>D.12</b> Qualitative instruments are developed	Contractor	<b>D.12</b> Qualitative survey	
	<b>D.13</b> Pilot and refine surveys	Norma	<b>D.13</b> # of surveys sent	<b>D.13</b> % surveys returned, completed
		Contractor		
	<b>D.14</b> Develop plan implement surveys on regular basis	RR committee	<b>D.14</b> Written plan	analysis
		Norma		
	<b>D.15</b> Develop budget and funding source to sustain and implement recruitment	Norma	<b>D.15</b> Written plan and budget	<b>D.15</b> The shortage of highly qualified special education teachers will



Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
system	assist in child-find, conflict resolution and parent support			
	<b>E.1.3</b> Disseminate culturally appropriate materials	PTI staff	<b>E.1.3</b> # publications distributed	
	<b>E.1.4</b> Collaborate with other parent/education agencies	<div>July</div> <div>Deb</div>	<b>E.1.4</b> # coordination meetings, # joint trainings held/attended	
<b>Objective E.2</b> To support Spanish-speaking parents to increase participation in their child's educational experiences	<b>E.2.1</b> Identify two Iowa School Districts with high minority populations for intensive work with families to increase their participation in IEP meetings	<div>July</div> <div>Deb</div>	<b>E.2.1</b> # culturally diverse parents attending IEP meetings	
	<b>E.2.2</b> Provide discussion	PTI staff	<b>E.2.2</b> # discussion group	<b>E.2.2</b> The percent of

Objectives	Activities/Timelines	Responsible Person(s)	Formative Performance Measures	Summative Evaluation Outcomes
	groups for families whose native language is Spanish to improve relationships with school personnel and increase family involvement at the building level.		sessions, # Spanish-speaking parents attending discussion group sessions, # families reporting increased satisfaction with school relationships and increased attendance IEP meetings	minority parents of students with disabilities attending IEP meeting and conferences will increase.

*How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services or others, as appropriate*

The Iowa Department of Education seeks input from the Special Education Advisory Panel for Part B and from the Interagency Council for Part C for any and all major undertakings. The input is sought during planning (see Needs Section), implementation, and formative and summative evaluation. The membership of those two bodies, whose representation includes parents, teachers, preservice, childcare representatives, business community, interdisciplinary and professional fields, individuals with disabilities and all other required partners, will be actively engaged in all stages of Iowa's SIP.

## **Quality of Project Evaluation**

The purpose of Iowa's SIP evaluation plan is to provide an objective and effective means of measuring progress toward desired outcomes. Evaluation activities will be performed at both the formative and summative levels and be on-going throughout the duration of the grant. This learning orientation will allow for the opportunity to identify lessons learned, barriers encountered and unintended effects throughout the implementation phase. At the summative level, the evaluation will inform staff and stakeholders regarding achievement of desired outcomes. Overall the project evaluation will:

- (a) Provide on-going data to support decision making and report project status to leadership and relevant stakeholders,
- (b) Allow for midcourse corrections and continuous improvement to increase impact of results
- (c) Communicate the value of the project to state and local stakeholders
- (d) Evaluate the progress on performance goals and objectives annually and at the end of the project (3 years).

Due to the number of initiatives proposed in this project and need to have frequent feedback, Iowa will use the Department of Education's Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services (BCFCS) three-member Evaluation Team to coordinate the overall grant evaluation. The team will work directly with project coordinators and contracted evaluators to evaluate each of the initiatives. The DE BCFCS Evaluation Team will also be involved in the implementation of SIP activities in order to provide ongoing feedback to the SIG director and Department leadership to guide progress toward intended outcomes and assist in data-based decisions for continuous improvements. Each member of this team is an expert in evaluation and data analysis and has extensive experience in providing evaluation services.

The evaluation methodology will include use of the Friedman "Results and Performance Accountability" model and link to Iowa's Data Driven Leadership framework. This framework is being used successfully throughout Iowa's educational system and offers the greatest capacity for focusing

outcomes and communicating them to all audiences including AEA and LEA personnel, DE staff, stakeholder groups, etc. Using performance measures to provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes we will monitor grant implementation. Annual evaluation reports focused on teacher and student performance data will complete the comprehensive approach, which examines the effectiveness of project implementation strategies using both quantitative and qualitative data.

*Extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project*

The Iowa SIP has a strong correspondence between visions, goal, objectives and evaluation questions. The SIP focuses on one systems change goal and related five objectives to accomplish intended outcomes. Evaluation questions are clearly related to the project goal and objectives and serve to focus attention on achievement of outcomes:

Evaluation questions include:

Objective A: Research-based Instruction for Striving Learners

- Are teachers adapting teaching strategies to use more scientifically based instructional methods?
- Are pilot site students with IEPs showing gains in reading and math on the ITBS/ITEDS?
- Do improved teaching strategies impact student achievement for special education students at the same rates as students with no disability?

Objective B: Increase capacity of early childhood programs to meet Iowa's Quality Standards

- Does self-assessment and training increase the quality of Community-based early childhood programs?
- What is the rate of improvement towards meeting Iowa's Quality Standards for Early Childhood Programs when training is provided to staff?

#### Objective C: Class C Endorsement

- Did all regions of Iowa have equal access to coursework for Strategist I certification?
- Are the numbers of class C endorsements for Strategist I reduced?

#### Objective D: Recruitment and Retention Study

- To what extent do retention patterns contribute to the shortage of special education teachers?
- What are appropriate tools to inform planners of the factors that increase retention and recruitment of special education teachers?

#### Objective E: PTI

- Do informed and supported minority parents increase their involvement in IEP meetings?
- Does culturally relevant parent training and information satisfactorily serve Iowa's growing ethnic and migrant population?

#### *Extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies*

The formative evaluation will regularly provide data and status updates to inform project evaluators, staff and DE-BCFS Evaluation Team of the effectiveness of the activity (implementation or formative evaluation) performance measures. The project staff can then carefully monitor which are encountering difficulty in implementation or simply not producing results. Adjustments can be made in a timely fashion, so that outcomes can be realized within the grant timeframe.

For each initiative, the evaluator will plan and monitor outcome data that will inform the Evaluation Team, leadership and stakeholders of the progress towards project outcomes. These outcomes include both teacher and student performance outcomes. At the end of each year, an annual performance report will be used to reevaluate activities and realign those initiatives which are not making adequate progress toward the goal.



*Extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.*

Using feedback from Iowa's Special Education Advisory Panel, the SIP goal and objectives and performance measures were written in clear, specific, jargon-free language intended to be understandable for all stakeholders and audiences. Objectivity was ensured by the writing of quantifiable performance and use of publicly available data as the prime source for outcome data (i.e. ITBS/ITEDS - student achievement data in reading and math). Using as much readily available data as possible will also serve to keep focus on familiar achievement standards/measurements and allow projects (when possible) to observe comparison groups to measure program impact. Another purpose for using existing data sources is to reduce the "data burden" whenever possible, which is a DE mandate from the Division Administrator.

To ensure objectivity and increase quality of the evaluation, the initiatives utilize both qualitative and quantitative performance measures directly related to the activities and intended outcomes of the project.

*Extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes*

The evaluation plan will provide formative evaluation to provide regular feedback at the activity level, permit midcourse performance adjustments and examine progress towards achieving intended outcomes. External evaluators for each initiative will work collaboratively with the overall DE-BCFS Evaluation Team to monitor progress towards performance measures and intended outcomes. The Management Plan details performance measures for each activity. Annual and end-of-project summative evaluation will provide assessment of performance relative to project outcomes. Outcomes for the project vision, goal and each initiative are:

*Vision:* The achievement gap in reading and math that currently exists between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced.

*Outcome:* The gap between students with disabilities and those without disabilities will be reduced in 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade reading and math as measured on the ITBS/ITEDS.

*Goal:* To ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to prepare families of students with disabilities to work as partners with educators.

*Outcomes:*

1. 95% of Strategist I teachers will be fully certified and endorsed by 2007.
2. The number of Early Childhood Programs meeting Iowa's Quality Program Standards will increase by 50 as measured by the Quality Standards self assessment.
3. The shortage of highly qualified special education teachers will be decreased by 10%.
4. The percent of minority parents of students with disabilities attending IEP meeting and conferences will increase.